

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION;
BEING AN EXAMINATION OF
THE DOCTRINE
OF
UNIVERSALISM,
IN A
SERIES OF LETTERS

BETWEEN

The Rev. Joseph M'Kee, of the Methodist Pro-
testant Church,

AND

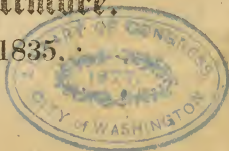
insert
The Rev. Otis A. Skinner, of the Universalist
Church.

"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

ST. PAUL.

Baltimore.

1835.



TO THE READER.

We hereby certify, that the following are true copies of the letters which we addressed to each other on the subject of Universalism, with the exception of some typographical errors, which have escaped the printer's notice, and which the reader can correct.

JOSEPH M'KEE,
OTIS A. SKINNER.

Baltimore, June 17, 1835.

A list of Authors whose works are either quoted or referred to, in this work.

Aristotle, Balfour, Ballou, Bass, Bartholdt, Brewster, Buck, Calmet, Campbell, Cappe, Clement, Chauncy, Clarke, Cruden, Donnegan, Dwyght, Du Pin, Eickhorn, Euripedes, Eusebius, Fisk, Gill, Gilpin, Goodwin, Grotius, Grove, Hammond, Hesiod, Henry, Hinks, Horne, Horner, Hottinger, Hippocrates, Hippolytus, Hudson, Huntington, Jahn, Josephus, Jones, Jonathan Ben Uzziel, Jorton, Kenrick, Kuinoel, Lardner, Lightfoot, Leusden, MacLaine, Macknight, Mede, Mosheim, Murry, Onkelos, Origen, Pearce, Parkhurst, Pinder, Pickering, Favorinus, Photius, Philo, Plato, Prideaux, Pyle, Rayner, Relly, Robinson, Rossinmuller, Scott, Simpson, Schrevelius, Saphocles, Streeter, Stuart, Tertullion, Valpy, Valentine, Watson, Wakefield, Webster, Wesley, Williams, Winchester, Whiston, Whitfield, Whitby, Whittemore, &c. &c. &c.

INDEX

TO THE SUBJECTS.

Aion, derivation of.	16	17	23	25	26	27	69	70
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77	174 302
“ signification of,	17	18	19	20	21	22	25	26 27
	28	29	30	74	161	162	163	164 168 169 170
	171	172	173	175	176	177	178	179 190 301
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	302
“ plural and reduplicate form of	20	21	28	29				
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	71 73 82	164 185
Aionios, derivation of	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	39
“ signification of	31	32	33	34	40	41	42	
-	-	-	86	93	97	106	217	220
Aidios, meaning of	-	-	-	-	-	-	228	237
Akatalutos, derivation and meaning of	103							224
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	234
Angels	-	-	-	-	-	-	137	239 253
Athanasia, signification of	-	-	-	-	-	-	227	233
Aphtharsia, meaning of	-	-	-	-	-	-	227	233
Aphthartos, signification of	-	-	-	-	-	-	227	233 301
Apokteino, derivation and meaning of	62							143
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	156	274
Chaff.	-	-	109	120	156	157	241	242
Damnation.	-	-	-	-	4	5	34	37 192
Day and night, meaning of	-	-	-	-	29	71	80	166
Diabolos.	-	-	-	-	96	108	139	222
Eis, use of in governing aion.	22	29	30	72				
-	-	-	-	-	80	161	167	179
Fire, unquenchable.	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	57 145
Feast.	-	-	-	-	-	-	114	127 214
Gehenna, derivation of	53	58	282	285	304			

Gehenna, signification of	3	4	10	54	55	56
	59	60	62	133	141	151 155 273
-	-	-	-	-	274	281 304
Hades.	-	-	3	55	59	129 274 283 287
Hell.	-	-	4	5	54 55	57 140 192 294
Krima.	-	-	-	-	-	36 37 49
Ktisis.	-	-	234	313	314	315 319 320
Life, several sorts of.	-	-	-	-	-	86 87
“ everlasting.	32	40	41	88	89	97 99 102
-	-	-	-	-	-	219
Maimed.	-	-	-	-	44	56 64 91
Net.	-	-	-	-	-	111 243
Olam.	-	15	24	98	181	216 217 229
Pan.	-	-	-	-	236	316 317 321
Polloi.	-	-	-	-	236	317 318
Rich man and Lazarus.	-	-	-	-	115	128 245
Sheol.	-	-	-	-	-	3 4
Sibylline Oracles.	-	-	-	-	-	146 252
Sin, infinite.	-	-	-	-	9	64 76 191
Scripture names for hell.	-	-	-	-	-	192 202
Salt.	-	-	-	-	110	122 243
Seven spirits,	-	-	-	-	111	122 243
Texts, against Universalism.						
— Math.	XVIII.	8.	-	-	-	34 44
— —	XXV.	41 46.	44	45	91	92 93
-	-	-	-	-	-	106
— Mark	III.	29.	20	29	35	46 92
-	-	-	-	106	163	186 220
— Heb.	VI.	2.	36	47	92	106
— 2 Pet.	II.	17.	20	29	163	186
— Jud.		7 13.	20	29	37	50 92
-	-	-	-	106	163	188
— Rev.	XIV.	11.	21	29	165	187
— —	XIX.	3.	21	29	165	187
— —	XX.	10.	21	29	168	187

Texts, for Universalism.									
—	John	XII. 32.				133	247	261	
—	Rom.	V. 20.				133	248	262	
—	Eph.	I. 9 10.	133	235	249	266			
—	1 John.	IV. 14.	133	248	264				
—	1 Cor,	X. 22.				225	233		
—	1 Cor.	XV. 52.				103	225		
Targum.	55	58 138	150	272	275	279	280		
-	-	-	-	-	-	289	303		
Tetagmenoi.	-	-	-	-	89	104	219		
Talents.	-	-	-	-	113	126	244		
Tares.	-	-	-	-	112	124	243		
Ten virgins.	-	-	-	-	113	125	244		
Tree.	-	109	117	120	131	242	247		
Universalism,	origin of.	-	-	-	-	134	149		
"	history of.	2	8	67	134	138			
-	-	146	150	250	253				
"	twelve objections to.	109	111						
		113	118	119	134	240	247	255	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	260		
"	twenty-four objections to.	192							
		194	196	200	20	208	212	215	
Vine.	-	-	-	-	-	116	246		

INTRODUCTION.

The circumstance which gave rise to this discussion was the publication of the following article in the Southern Pioneer and Gospel Visiter, a weekly journal, devoted to Universalism, printed in Baltimore. The article was copied from the Christian Intelligencer.

THE WHOLE COUNSEL.

Br. Fletcher of the Thomaston Telescope, noting the declaration of Paul—"I have not shunned to declare *the whole counsel of God*," asks how this fact is to be accounted for consistently with the *other* fact that in all his declarations he never used the word *hell*, nor mentioned such a place during his whole ministry? This is, indeed, an important inquiry—will some of our wise limitarians please to answer it?

Soon after the publication of the above Mr. McKee wrote for the Pioneer, the following answer, over the signature PHILADELPHIA.

Mr. Editor:—THE WHOLE COUNSEL.

On looking over the 22d number of the "Southern Pioneer," I observed an article

headed, "The whole counsel," copied from another paper, in which it is asked, how we are to account for the fact that St. Paul, who shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, in all his declarations during his ministry, never once used the word hell nor mentioned such a place? Take the following as an answer:

1. St. Paul delivered his discourses in the Greek and Hebrew languages and not in English: therefore, it is not strange that he never used the old Saxon word *helle*, which is now *hell* in English, but it would be very strange if he had used it as it neither belonged to the languages then spoken nor was understood by the people.

2. It is assumed as a well authenticated fact, that St. Paul during his whole ministry never mentioned such a place as hell. Now as the Apostle's discourses were not written, who without the attribute of omniscience can tell, but he did use some word equivalent to hell in signification more than a thousand times? The fact is, there is as much evidence to prove that he did as there is that he did not.

3. St. Paul preached the doctrine of endless punishment as unequivocally as any other man ever did. For in 2 Thes. i. 9. he declared that the wicked should be punished with *everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord and from

the glory of his power. Let it be observed that the word *aionios* here rendered everlasting is the same which is used in 2 Thes. ii. 16. to express the duration of the consolation of the righteous. See. 2. Tim. ii. 10. Rom. vi. 23, where it is similarly used.—And 2. Cor. iv. 18, where it denotes the duration of all invisible things. As the same Greek word is employed to express both the duration of the happiness of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, what reason have we to believe that the latter will terminate sooner than the former? Will as many editors publish this answer as copied the question and so let it travel over the same space?

To this Mr. Skinner gave the following reply:

REPLY TO PHILADELPHIA—Dear sir: The question to which your communication is designed as a reply, has been repeatedly propounded to our partialist friends; but it has never yet received a satisfactory answer. If the popular doctrine of hell torments be true, it is at least right to infer, that it was a doctrine of the apostles; and it is your duty to produce from their preaching authority for the sentiment, or cease from preaching it. But how can this be done, when the leading apostle, the one who labored more than all the others, was silent on the subject?

I cannot but regard your answer as an entire failure. I am willing to admit that the apostle preached in the Hebrew and Greek languages; but how does this affect the case? The question is not, whether the apostle, when preaching in Greek, used the Saxon word hell, but whether he used any word expressive of the popular notion about hell? The Saxon word hell, is a translation of the Hebrew words *sheol* and *gehenna*, and of the Greek words *hades* and *tartarus*. Now as Paul did not use either *Gehenna*, *Sheol*, *Hades* or *Tartarus*, your answer does not meet the question; for Sir, your answer implies, that though Paul did not use our word hell, he used one of the same import. To justify the preaching of the present day, Paul should have been continually thundering about *Sheol* and *Gehanna*, *Hades* and *Tartarus*. His silence, therefore, on these, condemns in full, the popular preaching of the day; for if Paul, who shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, was silent respecting the torments of *hell*, those who are eternally preaching them, declare more than the counsel of God.

The second point embraced in your answer, seems to us a strange conclusion. Why, we ask, if the doctrine of endless hell, is as important as partialists believe;

did Luke, who recorded the apostle's discourses, leave out what he had said respecting it? Suppose a person should give a faithful record of Methodist Sermons, think there would be an entire silence respecting hell?

But you say all of Paul's discourses were not recorded. True, but why infer that those left unrecorded, differ from those which have been preserved for our especial guidance and edification? Why should those, the most important, and which contained what you call a leading doctrine of Christ, a doctrine essential to salvation, be omitted, and those which accord with the doctrine that God will have mercy on all, be recorded? You can say, that Paul used a word equivalent to hell a thousand times; but Sir, this is only your ipsi-dixit, and will not be satisfactory to those who take the bible for their guide.

The third point in your answer, we consider entirely destitute of foundation. Paul has applied no word, unequivocal in its meaning, to the duration of sin or any of its consequences. In Methodist Sermons, we find endless hell, endless damnation, and endless torture; but no such language is found in the writings of Paul.

We are aware that Paul used the word *aionion* or *everlasting*, but this is applied to hills, mountains, covenants, priesthoods,

and a great variety of things, limited in their nature, so that the word is equivocal. Now as it is the strongest word used by the Apostle in connexion with misery, how can it be said, that he as unequivocally preached endless punishment, as any man living?

The text to which you have referred as proof is far from being to the point. If you will look at the connexion, you will see that the time of that destruction was when the Jews were destroyed by the the Romans. Who were to be destroyed. Ans. Those that persecuted the christians. When were they to be destroyed? Ans? when Christ came to take vengeance on his enemies. But when was Christ thus to come? Ans. Before the generation then living passed away. Hence the christians were besought by the coming of Christ, not to be troubled by letter or spirit, as that the day of Christ was at hand. The presence of the Lord from which they were punished was Jerusalem, where the Jews considered that God's presence could be alone enjoyed, and where they went up to worship. Sec. 2d. Kings 13. 23 See also 1st. Kings chap. 8.

But you say, this word *aionion* is the one employed to express the duration of the consolation of the righteous. Were this granted, the instance to which you re-

fer is proof against you, for it says, "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God, even our Father, which hath saved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work." In these words the Apostle had no reference to a future state: he was speaking of the happiness which they, as christians, then enjoyed. But could they not fall back and lose their faith and love? Did not the apostle exhort his brethren to continue faithful unto the end? Did not the love of many wax cold in his day as the consequence of persecution? Then their consolation was not endless, although styled everlasting.

If, however, 2d. Thess. ii. 16. referred to futurity, it would fail of sustaining your position. We admit that *aion* is often used in an unlimited sense; but as it is variously used, sometimes in a limited and sometimes in an unlimited sense, it is for you to prove, that when applied to punishment, it signifies endless. The circumstance that things unseen are called *aionion*, proves nothing, because their nature is endless; and therefore, the word when applied to them has an endless signification, the same as when applied to God. As 2 Tim. ii. 10, and Rom. vi. 22, would not sustain your views, even admitting they refer to futurity, I

will pass them by simply remarking, that it is not enough to prove that we read of *aionion* glory and *aionion* life; for the glory and life of the Gospel are entirely different in their nature from punishment. Besides, there are other words applied to the glory and life of the Gospel, which are strictly unequivocal in their meaning—such as endless, incorruptible and immortal—words that are never applied to sin or any of its consequences. Your conclusion, therefore, respecting the duration of punishment is unfounded. Indeed, I might as well say, because *aion* is applied to the priesthood of *Aaron*, it is endless, as you can say, punishment is endless, because we read of *aionion* punishment.

In the same paper containing the above, Mr. Skinner published the note, soon after which Mr. M'Kee accepted the proposition.

We understand that *Philadelphia* wishes to have a controversy with us through the columns of the *Pioneer*. We will cheerfully comply with his request on condition that he will write over his own signature, and on no other condition.

THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION.

LETTER, NO. I.

BALTIMORE, Oct. 20th, 1834.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir,—I perceive by a note in the 24th number of the “Southern Pioneer” that you have no objection to discuss the doctrine of Universalism with “Philadelphia” through your columns, on the condition that he will write over his proper signature. With this condition I will cheerfully comply and shall therefore proceed, bye and bye, to offer some objections to the system of Universalism, and try to refute the arguments by which it is supported, as far as they have come to my knowledge or shall come to it. I wish to pursue this course because I consider it a duty I owe to truth, to my neighbour, and to God; as I am fully persuaded the doctrine in question is a dangerous *heresy*, first introduced into the christian church by *Origen* and *Clement* of Alexandria, and afterwards propagated by artful and cunning

men, who found it necessary to resort to the mean artifice of torturing and perverting the words and phrases of Sacred Scripture from their proper signification, to render the doctrine plausible in the estimation of the illiterate. Universalism appears rather to be a heap of wild confusion without form, than a system, possessing that regularity and consistency which are necessary to attract the attention of wise and discriminating men. It is more like the confusion of Babel than a doctrine coming from a God of order and regularity. It appears to me that every Universalist has a view of the doctrine peculiar to himself, or, rather holds a doctrine which is the mere creature of his own imagination. When searching after truth I found the following *five* systems of Universalism, all of which have been taught by Universalists by means of books and otherwise, each of which differs from the rest in some important point or other.

1. There is a dreadful hell or place of punishment in which the wicked of mankind and all devils shall be punished after this life but it is not eternal, for it will come to an end and all its inhabitants shall escape to the mansions of endless felicity.

2. The wicked shall be punished in proportion to their crimes, in a future state, and thereby fully satisfy all the demands of the law, and finally get to Heaven upon the ground of right, independently of the mercy of God or the atonement made by Jesus Christ.

3. The wicked shall be punished proportionably to the magnitude and number of their crimes, but it is not known whether it shall

take place in this life or that which is to come, after which they shall be saved by forgiveness of sin through the mercy of God.

4. There is no hell or place of punishment in a future state of existence, for all the wicked shall be punished in this life and shall go direct to Heaven the instant the soul leaves the body.

5. The soul is not immortal in its nature or constitution, and therefore the souls of the wicked shall be annihilated.

Now, sir, I wish to know which of these five systems I am to take for genuine Universalism. Each had its time, its admirers and its advocates. Which one do you espouse? Or do you support the whole *en masse*? Or, have you invented one of your own? To these inquiries I wish you to give me decisive answers, as I will then know how to proceed and not till then.

These questions I consider altogether fair and proper, consequently I will expect an unequivocal answer to each of them. If you do not answer them I will think that you wish to keep the people in the dark on the subject because you know it will not bear the light of an open and candid investigation.

With regard to your "reply to Philadelphia" I would remark, that the doctrine of *endless* punishment is not depending entirely on Paul, Peter, John, or Jude; nor is it depending for support on the words *sheol*, *gehenna*, *hades*, or *tartarus*; for, there are other proofs which I have to lay before your readers, that will be more difficult for you to digest than perhaps any which you have let into your paper, though I shall avail myself of all the helps I can collect from those sources. Suppose for the pre-

sent (which I by no means admit) that Paul was silent on the subject of endless punishment; does his silence prove there is no such doctrine as endless punishment? Certainly not. Are there not other inspired writers equal in authority with Paul? This you must admit unless you allow that Paul was a *Pope*. Then, if any inspired writer taught the doctrine of endless torment or of an endless hell, is not the doctrine true? Neither Paul or any other inspired writer ever said or wrote, that the future punishment of the wicked would come to an end or that it was not eternal. Nearly all the inspired writers have declared, either directly or indirectly that it will not come to an end and that it is eternal. What then am I to believe regarding Universalism? Whether am I to believe the infallible word of God or the word of fallen and depraved man? I leave the reader to judge in this case and form his own conclusion.

You say that in order to justify the preaching of the present day, "Paul should have been continually thundering about *sheol*, and *gehenna*" &c. In reply I would say that the "Methodist sermons" which are so full of *hell*, *hell fire*, *damnation*, *eternal damnation*, *damnation of hell*, &c. &c., have for their example a higher authority than Paul. They have the example of Jesus Christ who taught the truth of God in a clearer and fuller manner than any man ever did. And this is all the authority I want to justify the "popular preaching" of the present day. As a few instances of this I submit the following to your consideration and for the information of your readers:—"Fear him who, after

he hath killed, hath power to cast into *hell*" (*gehenna*) Luke xii. 5. "Whosoever shall say thou fool shall be in danger of *hell fire* (*gehenna*) Matt. v. 22. See also Matt. v. 29, 30, and xviii. 9, where the word *gehenna* is used, which you say had it been used by Paul would justify the popular preaching of the present day. "Ye devour widows' houses, &c. therefore ye shall receive the greater *damnation*," Matt xxiii. 14. "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, &c., is in danger of *eternal damnation*" (*aionion*) Mark iii. 29. "How can ye escape the *damnation of hell*" (*gehenna*) Matt. xxiii. 33. We consider these expressions, sir, which were employed by our blessed Saviour in the course of his preaching, perfectly sufficient to justify and authorize the present mode of preaching among the Methodists, while we regard the Universalists as anti-christian in their doctrine, so far as they oppose the doctrine taught by Christ. It cannot be denied that they either omit the doctrine of *hell and damnation* or deny the existence of such misery and punishment, and in this instance we must regard them as holding a dangerous *heresy* unknown in the days of Christ and his Apostles.

You say that if I look at the connexion of the text in 2 Thes. i. 9. I will see that the destruction alluded to was that of the Jews by the Romans. Now, sir, I look upon this as one of those perversions of scripture which is never used in a good cause, but always required to support a bad one. Who in his proper senses could think for a moment that Paul had any allusion whatever to the destruction of the Jews by the Romans? I cannot think he had the

slightest reference to that catastrophe, for the following reasons:—

1. The epistle was written to a church chiefly composed of converts from among the Gentiles who were not greatly interested in the affairs of the Jewish nation.

2. The Apostle throughout the whole epistle never once names either the Jewish nation or the Roman army, nor any other appellation by which either can be reasonably understood; consequently there is no reason for believing he had any reference to the overthrow of the Jewish nation.

3. Upon a review of the chapter an unprejudiced person would see several things that would lead him to conclude that the destruction in question was to take place at the day of judgment: for instance, the phrase, “taking vengeance on them that *know not God*.” This cannot be said of the Jews, but of the Gentiles, as the former did know God in theory at least, while the latter did not know him. “Admired in *all* them that believe.” The Redeemer could not be admired in **ALL** short of the day of judgment but only of a part of them.

4. But what seems to determine the matter to a certainty is, the caution given in the second chapter, where the apostle cautions them lest they should be shaken in mind, as if these things were to happen immediately; at the same time he assures them that that overthrow should not happen till after the establishment of antichrist or man of sin, whose destruction should be accomplished in the general overthrow of the enemies of the saints. It is obvious that this prophecy is not yet accomplished.

5. All the commentators that I have consulted on the meaning of this epistle agree in referring the principal transactions of it to the judgment of the great day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest by Jesus Christ.

You say, "we are aware that Paul used the word *aionion* or *everlasting*, but this is applied to hills, mountains, covenants, priesthoods, and a great variety of things, limited in their nature." I confess, sir, that I have read this sentence with perfect astonishment. Was it written with a design to deceive the unlearned? I absolutely deny that the word *aionion* was ever used by any inspired writer to signify the duration of a hill, mountain or priesthood, except the priesthood of Christ. I challenge you to produce one instance of it. If you show me one instance of it I here promise to give up the argument so far as the word *aionios* is concerned. You may expect to hear from me before long concerning the words *aion* and *aionios*.

Yours, in the bonds of a peaceful Gospel,
JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER NO. I.

BALTIMORE, Oct. 24, 1834.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir—In our zeal to sustain a favorite theory, we often attach a high importance to circumstances of a trifling nature, and to arguments that have no connexion with our subject.

Such I consider to be the case, with your remarks on the difference of opinion among Universalists; for none who consider the nature of the human mind and the result of controversy, can expect a perfect uniformity in faith, among a people, who think and judge for themselves. Such a uniformity exists among no sect in christendom. Besides, if your argument is good, it can be wielded with irresistible power, against all Protestants; yea, against all religion.

But what is this mighty difference to which you attach such great importance? To make it imposing as possible, you have drawn lines of distinction, where no difference exists; you have ascribed to us sentiments, in which we have no faith; and you have christened as Universalism, that which wars against our very name. What is the real difference between the first and second systems, which you ascribe to Universalists? Where did you learn, that they expect to get to Heaven on the ground of right, independent of the mercy of God? And where did you learn that some Universalists advocate the annihilation of the wicked? As annihilation is not salvation, you do violence to language, in saying, that some Universalists, hold that the wicked will be annihilated. Your question, whether I support the five systems *en masse*, even if Universalists believed them, should never have been penned. However, the judgment will be upon your own head.

There is but a trifling difference among Universalists. All believe that punishment is designed to reform, and that it will in no case be continued after reformation is produced. None believe that it is salvation, that it entitles to

salvation, or that it is the only means of salvation. The difference then is simply in regard to the *duration* of punishment. Some think it all confined to this world. Others, that it extends to the future. This latter is my opinion.

Here then are only *shades* of difference. But look at the conflicting systems of partialism, and you will observe differences of the greatest magnitude. By one, we are taught, that an eternal decree of God, passed for his own glory and pleasure, drives some down to the gates of endless ruin. By another, that God is not arbitrary, and that endless misery is a punishment, of our voluntary transgressions. This latter teaches, that sin is infinite, and that we shall be endlessly punished, for the sins of this life; while another teaches, that we shall be endlessly miserable; not because our sins are infinite, but because we shall sin eternally.— One system teaches, that hell is *paved with infant skulls*, and another, that all infants will be happy. One teaches, that all the heathen will be lost, and another, that a part, at least, will be saved. In vain then, do we look to partialism, for those beautiful proportions, and that union, perfection and agreement, which are the distinguishing glories of the temple of truth.

Indeed, such is the wide difference of opinion, that we hear continually, both from the master builders and the workmen, on these modern babels, the noise of war and the confusion of tongues. *He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him.*

I admit that Paul's silence respecting Gehenna, is not positive proof that punishment is li-

mitted; but I find it impossible to reconcile his silence, admitting an endless punishment, with his declaration, that he declared the *whole counsel* of God. Still, if you can prove your doctrine from other inspired writers, you refute Universalism, but you do not answer the question which you attempted. Do you intend to perplex me with much proof like the following: "Neither Paul or any other inspired writer taught that punishment would come to an end. Nearly all have declared, either directly or indirectly, that it will not come to an end. Whether am I to believe the infallible word of God or the word of fallen man"? Who desired you to believe the word of man? Surely Universalists have made no such request. But when you, as in the words above, give us your *ipse dixit* concerning what the Apostles did and did not teach, we are left to infer, that you would wish us to take your word, rather than that of God.

Your remarks on Gehenna, require but a few words. I shall not consider your proof texts, until you give your reasons for applying them as you have. Neither will we argue the question, whether Christ is better authority than Paul, for I consider both good; but we will consider the fact, that while Jesus spoke of Gehenna, Paul was silent respecting it. Now if Gehenna in Paul's day, was the common word to designate a place of endless misery, and if Jesus used it in this sense, how shall we account for the fact, that Gehenna is not to be found in all the preaching and writing of Paul?

The new positions taken in your second letter, compel me to propose this question, as they

bring up an entire new subject for discussion. The original question, had no relation to the meaning of Gehenna, but it referred entirely to the fact, that Paul never used it. Hence the propriety of my remark, that Paul, to justify the preaching of the present age, should have been continually thundering about Gehenna &c. Therefore you have perverted my meaning, in saying, I admit, that had Paul used Gehenna, it would have justified the popular preaching about hell. I admitted nothing of the kind.

I was simply considering the circumstance of Paul's not using Gehenna, without any reference to its meaning, which was agreeable to the original question. But now, as you have abandoned the first question, and adopted one in relation to the meaning of Gehenna, I shall expect your particular attention to the question proposed, and to your proofs for applying Gehenna as you have.

In considering what you have said respecting 2. Thes. 1. 9. I shall pass in silence your charge of "*perversion of scripture*" and want of "*sense*," for they are entirely gratuitous, and can do me no injury, and you no service.

To your 1st preposition I reply: It matters not of whom the church at Thessalonica were composed, or whether they were interested in the affairs of the Jewish nation, since they were troubled and persecuted on every hand by the Jews. See Acts xvii. 13. where you will find an explanation of the phrase, "you who are troubled rest with us." These persecutions, gave the Thessalonians a thrilling interest in the question, when the Jewish government was to be abolished? Hence the language, *rest with*

us—when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed—taking vengeance, &c.

To your 2d proposition I reply: To say that Paul uses no appellation by which the Jews or the Roman army can be understood, is assuming the point in question. If the Jews were not intended, whom did Paul mean, by them that *troubled* the Christians? And if the Roman army was not intended, what did he mean by taking *vengeance*? In Matt. 24th chapter, which all refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews are not named; neither is the Roman army. But whoever brought this as an argument against the common application of the chap.? It speaks of persecution, exhorts to faithfulness by the coming of Christ, and threatens the persecutors with destruction. Now the same persecutions are mentioned, the same exhortations given, and the same judgments denounced in Thess. and the time of the destruction is in both, declared to be, at the coming or revelation of Christ. Must not the Apostle then, have referred to the overthrow of the Jewish nation?

To your 3d proposition I reply: When we connect, and *obey not the Gospel*, with the phrase, *know not God*, it is impossible to resist the conclusion, that Jews were intended; for those who had not *heard* the Gospel, could not be *damned* for not *obeying* it. Besides, in the scriptural sense, the Jews were ignorant of God, and of the great work which he was doing. As *vengeance* is frequently used to express temporal punishments, I can see no reason for referring it in this instance, to a judgment beyond this world. See Isai. xxxiv, 8; xlvii.

3. Jer. li. 6; 36. In Luke xxi. 22, *vengeance* is applied to the destruction of Jerusalem. The word therefore is against you. Inasmuch as all the churches enjoyed a season of rest, after the destruction of Jerusalem, I can see no difficulty in the phrase, *admired in all them that believe*. It is the same as, *glorified in his saints*. Language far more comprehensive, is used with reference to the coming of Christ. See Matt. xvi. 27. where the phrase *every man* is used; and Matt. xxiv. 14. where the phrases, *all the world* and *all nations*, are used.

Your 4th proposition is refuted by the circumstances, which called forth the Epis. from which the text under consideration is taken.—From some circumstance, many of the Thessalonians believed that the coming of Christ was immediately to take place. The 2d Epis. to them was written partly to correct this error. Hence the Apostle says, “Now I beseech you brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.” Now while the Apostle cautions them against expecting Christ immediately, and of being deceived, he holds up the idea, that Christ would come in their day. Hence after having said the *day* would not come unless there was a falling away, and the man of sin was revealed, he speaks of his already working, and of there being then signs of the iniquity, that would foretell the day. Suppose the day was a general judgment; how could it be uncertain? How

could it depend on there being a falling away first?

On your 5th proposition, I will only say; had your reading been more extensive, you would have found commentators, who agree with the opinion, which I have advanced.—Hammond and Cappe both refer the text to the destruction of Jerusalem. So does Gill, though he afterwards contradicts the opinion. And Clarke has some doubts on the subject.

As 2d Thess. 1. 5—10. is regarded, as one of the strongest texts, in favor of endless misery, I am anxious to have it fully discussed. And for this purpose, I will propose the following questions: 1st. If the revelation of Christ, here mentioned, was not his coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, wherein was the propriety, of exhorting the Thessalonians to faithfulness, with reference to it? “You who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God.” This, when considered with the verses in connexion, (see v. 5.) shows, that at Christ’s coming, they would be delivered from suffering and persecution. But if we make this coming, still future, how can that be? Such exhortations are common. “For ye have need of patience; that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.” Heb. viii. 36, 37.

2d. Was not the Apostle speaking particularly of the persecuted Christians and their deliverance; of their persecutors and their punishment? Seeing it is a righteous thing with

God to recompense tribulation to *them*, that trouble *you*; and to *you* who are troubled, &c. This language shows, that he was speaking, not of a general judgment, but a particular judgment, to come on the Jews for troubling the Christians.

3d. How will you reconcile the uncertainty of the *day*, with the idea, that it refers to a future judgment? "For that day, shall not come, except there come a falling away first" v. 3. chap. ii.

4th. Are not those who troubled the christians, the same, as the *man of sin—the son of perdition*? See v. 7. chap. 2d, where Paul says, the mystery of iniquity doth *already work*. See also v. 8. which teaches, that when this wicked one was revealed, he would be consumed by the brightness of the Lord's coming. And if so, must not his coming, have been in that age?

You express great astonishment at my saying *aionion* or *everlasting* is applied to hills; but why this astonishment, since *aion* is synonymous with *olam*? You ask, if I wrote this to deceive the unlearned? But before you threw out such an insinuation, you should have proven that the learned are wrong in saying, that *aion* expresses the meaning of *olam*. I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER NO. II.

BALTIMORE, Oct. 27, 1834.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir:—I promised in my last communication to send you something concerning the words *aion* and *aionios*. I now proceed to fulfil my promise. As the discussion of these two words would occupy too much space for one number of your paper I shall now confine myself to the noun *aion*. A proper understanding of the derivation and true signification of this word will cast much light on the present controversy. I find that the Universalists generally wish to keep the etymology of this word in the dark, because every well informed man among them must be aware that a proper development of it would overthrow their whole system. This disposition is manifest in your sermon on a paragraph of Matthew's Gospel, which you erroneously call "the *parable* of the sheep and the goats," where you say, you "will not stop to enquire into the etymological meaning of the (*original*) word." Now, sir, I think all good critics will agree with me when I say that a proper knowledge of the etymology of a word is indispensably necessary in order to have a right understanding of its true signification. Believing this to be the fact I shall proceed to shew its derivation and signification according to some of the best critics that ever wrote on the subject.

Aristotle, of whom Dr. A. Clarke says, "a higher authority need not be sought," says the

word *aion* is compounded of *aei*, *always*, and *on*, *being*, and properly signifies *always being*, or *eternity*. *De Coel* l.b. 1. chap. 9.

Philo, and Phavorinus, derive *aion* from *aei*, *ever*, and *on*, *existing*, *everlasting*. *Ruffner's* *serm. on future punishment*, page 24.

Bass, in his *Greek and English Lexicon* derives the word from *aei*, *ever*, and *on*, *being*, *unlimited duration*. *London Edit.* 1820.

Grove, in his *Greek and English Dictionary* derives the word *aion* from *aei*, *ever*, and *on*, *being*, *eternity*. *Boston Edit.* 1833.

Parkhurst, says *aion* is derived from *aei* and *on*, *always being*, *eternity*. *Greek and English Lexicon*, *London Edit.* 1822.

Dr. Clarke says *aion* comes from *aei* *always*, and *on*, *being*, or *existence*, and affirms that, "there is no word in any language which more forcibly points out the grand characteristic of eternity—that which always exists. * * * * It is the gramatical and proper sense of it, that must be resorted to in any controversy concerning the word." *Notes on Matt.* vii. 13. Again, "*aion*, *aei*, *on*, *continual being*; and no words can more forcibly point out eternity than these." *Notes on Matt.* xxiv. 3. Again, "*aion* from *aei* *always*, and *on* *being*, or *existence*. And indeed no words can more forcibly convey the idea of eternity than these." *Notes on John* xvii. 3. Again, "*aion* signifies complete, or everlasting existence, or eternity." *Notes on Acts* iii 21. And again, "those who bring any of these terms, (*olam* and *aion*) in an accommodated sense, to favour a particular doctrine, &c., must depend on the good graces of their opponents, for permission to use them in

this way. For as the real gramatical meaning of both words is *eternal*, and all other meanings *accommodated* ones, sound criticism, in all matters of dispute concerning the import of a word or term, must have recourse to the gramatical meaning, and its use among the earliest and most correct writers in the language; and will determine all *accommodated* meanings by this alone. Now, the first and best writers in both these languages apply *olam* and *aion* to express *eternal* in the proper meaning of that word; and this is their proper meaning in the Old and New Testaments when applied to God, his attributes, his operations taken in connexion with the ends for which he performs them, for whatsoever he doth it shall be *forever*.—Eccl. iii. 14. * * * * The word is with the same strict propriety, applied to the rewards and punishments in a future state. And the argument that pretends to prove, and it is only pretension, that in the future punishment of the wicked “the worm *shall die*” and “the fire *shall be quenched*” will apply as forcibly to the state of happy spirits, and as fully prove, that a point in eternity shall arrive when the repose of the righteous shall be interrupted, and the glorification of the children of God have an eternal end. The absurdity of such tenets prevents them from becoming very dangerous.” Thus far Dr. Clarke. See *Notes on Gen. xxi. 33.*

Now, sir, having clearly shewn from the above cited authorities that the proper, etymological, and gramatical signification of the Greek noun *aion* is *unlimited duration, eternity* in the proper sense of the word, I shall now proceed to consider it as found in the New Tes-

tament. The word *aion* occurs 63 times in the *singular* number, 18 times in the *plural*, and 23 times in a *double*, or *reduplicate* form. If each reduplication be considered as a single instance the whole number will be 104 times in the New Testament. But, to be more particular. The word *aion* is sometimes used in a *metaphorical* sense and by way of accommodation applied, in some instances, to things that are not in themselves eternal in the proper sense of the word. In all cases where this occurs there is sufficient intimation of it given in the sentence; but, if no such intimation be given the proper and grammatical meaning must always be taken unless it involve a palpable absurdity or contradiction. This rule is tenaciously adhered to by all good critics in all theological disputations.

This noun in the *singular* number is used 27 times in a *metaphorical* sense, and signifies a *temporary duration*. It is 20 times translated "*this world*," 6 times "*the world*," and 1 time "*that world*." The following are the places where it is employed in this accommodated sense:—Matt. xii. 32; xiii. 22; 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 3; xxviii. 20; Mark iv. 19; Luke i. 70; xvi. 8; xx. 34, 35; Acts iii. 21; Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. i. 20; ii. 6 twice, 8; iii. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Gal. i. 4; Eph. i. 21; ii. 2; vi. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 17; 2 Tim. iv. 10; Tit. ii. 12.

This word is used 36 times in the *singular* to signify *endless duration*, and is 20 times rendered, "*for ever*," 7 times "*never*," 3 times "*the world to come*," twice "*ever*," 1 time "*since the world began*," 1 time "*from the beginning of the world*," 1 time, "*while the world*

standeth," and 1 time "*forevermore*." The places are as follows:—Matt. xxi. 19; Mark x. 30; xi. 14; Luke i. 55; xviii. 30; John iv. 14; vi. 51, 58; viii. 35 twice; 51, 52; ix. 32; x. 28; xi. 26; xii. 34; xiii. 8; xiv. 16; Acts xv. 18; 1 Cor. viii. 13; 2 Cor. ix. 9; Heb. v. 6; vi. 5, 20; vii. 17, 21, 22, 28; 1 Pet. i. 23, 25; 2 Pet. iii. 18; 1 John ii. 17; 2 John 2. In the following *three* places the word is employed to express the illimitable duration of the punishment of the wicked. Mark iii. 29; 2 Pet. ii. 17; Jud. 13.

The word *aion* occurs 18 times in the *plural* form, and in the 6 following places it has a *figurative* and *limited* signification where it is three times translated "*the world*," twice "*the worlds*," and 1 time "*the ages*." 1 Cor. ii. 7; x. 11; Eph. ii. 7; Heb. i. 2; ix. 26; xi. 3.

The word in the *plural* form signifies *endless duration* in the 12 following places, and is 7 times rendered "*forever*," twice "*eternal*," 1 time "*forevermore*," 1 time "*from the beginning of the world*," and 1 time "*ages*." Matt. vi. 13; Luke i. 33; Rom. i. 25; ix. 5; xi. 36; xvi. 27; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Eph. iii. 9; 11; Col. i. 26; 1 Tim. i. 17; Heb. xiii. 8.

The word *aion* in a *doubled* or *reduplicate* form as, *oi aiones ton aionon* occurs 23 times *only* in the New Testament, and is invariably employed to express *endless duration*. It is 21 times translated "*forever and ever*," 1 time "*forevermore*," and 1 time "*throughout all ages, world without end*." This phrase is employed 10 times to express the interminable duration of the glory of the ever blessed God; as follows: Gal. i. 5; Eph. iii. 21; Phil. iv. 20; 1 Tim. i.

17; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Heb xiii. 21; 1 Pet. iv. 11; v. 11; Rev. i. 6; vii. 12. It is 4 times used to express the eternity, or eternal duration of the Deity. Rev. iv. 9, 10; x. 6; xv. 7. It is 1 time employed to denote the eternity of the Throne of Jehovah. Heb. i. 8. It is 1 time used to express the immortality and eternity of Christ. Rev. i. 18. Once to show the duration of Christ's reign. Rev. xi. 15. Twice to express the duration of his glory. Rev. v. 13, 14. It is once employed to express the duration of the happiness of the redeemed. Rev. xxii. 5. It is one time employed to denote the duration of the punishment of those idolaters that worshiped the beast and his image, and received his mark in their forehead. Rev. xiv. 11. In one place it expresses the duration of the *fire* that shall burn the mystical Babylon. Rev. xix. 3. And lastly it is one time used to denote the duration of the *torment* which the devil, the beast, and the false prophet shall endure in the lake of fire. Rev. xx. 10. The above cited are the only places where this phrase is to be found among the inspired writers; and, in every case it is used in its literal and grammatical signification, which is time without end, or eternity in the proper sense of the word. I apprehend there can be no dispute about this. It is spoken 19 times relative to the being and attributes of God. One time respecting the future happiness of the saints; and three times (most awful thought!) to express the eternity of future punishment. Of the 104 times in which this word occurs in the New Testament, only 33 cases relate to *temporary* duration, 65 cases are acknowledged, on

on all hands, to signify *endless* duration, and 6 relate to the *endless* punishment of the damned. The word *aion* is governed by the preposition *eis* sixty-one times in the New Testament. It is *never* used in this construction in any one of the 33 cases of *temporary* duration. In the six cases of *endless* punishment the word is used in this construction; and in the other fifty-five cases it is readily acknowledged to have an *endless* signification. What then, I ask, would any sensible, unprejudiced man conclude concerning the six cases of future punishment, but that they signified *endless duration* as well as the other fifty-five cases of the same construction. For the truth of these matters I appeal to the candid reader who understands the Greek Testament. I am well aware that the Universalists endeavor to raise as many quibbles as possible concerning the *singular* and the *plural* of this word, and its *doubled* form, and the *particles* connected with it in the Septuagint version of the Bible, evidently through ignorance, or design to deceive the unlearned. For I never saw any thing of this kind but what a scholar would despise. I assert, once for all, without fear of successful contradiction, that no profound scholar but an impostor would say that *aion* in the six places under consideration did not mean *endless* punishment.

You may expect to hear from me bye and bye respecting the adjective *aionios*.

As early an insertion of this article as possible will much oblige me as it is likely I will have to leave this city before long.

Believe me to be yours in the best of bonds,

JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER NO. II.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 1, 1834.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir:—Your letter embraces the substance of all the arguments, drawn from *aion*, against our faith; and I am pleased, that you have succeeded in presenting their whole strength, in so few words. As much depends upon a correct understanding of the word, it is important that it should be critically and carefully examined. I believe you right in your derivation of it, but wrong in your definition.

I object in toto to your manner of quoting authorities. They should be given in full, or not at all. Besides, *Aristotle* and *Philo* are second hand; and if what you have quoted is their whole definition, they differ from all other Lexicographers. But I have reason to believe your quotations imperfect; for Rev. E. S. Goodwin, after a minute and critical examination of Aristotle's writings—an examination aided by three sources of evidence, *etymology*, *lexicography* and the actual usage of *aion*, says, that he never uses it as signifying *eternity*, but as denoting *being*, *life*, *existence*, without denoting their duration. He says this also, of *Homer*, *Hesiod*, *Æschylus*, *Pindar*, *Sophocles*, *Hippocrates*, *Euripides*, and *Plato*.

Your quotation from Dr. Clarke will have but little weight, when it is considered; that what he wrote, was to defend his favorite theory, and not to inquire after the true meaning of

aion. His attempt to strain an argument from Eccl. iii. 14. is in perfect keeping with his monkey exposition. You might as well say, the earth is endless, because the work of God, as punishment, because inflicted by him. That *olam* and *aion* are endless, when applied to God, none deny; but does this prove them endless, when applied to things temporal? The Dr's position here is a perfect sophism. Prove that punishment is endless, or that Solomon was speaking of punishment in Eccl. iii. 14, and then, it will be time to say, that *olam* and *aion* are endless, when connected with it. His play upon the phrase unquenchable fire, is at the expense of truth; for if you will turn to Isa. xxxiv. 9—11; Isai. 66. 24; Jer. xvii. 27; Eze. xx. 45—48, you will find, that an unquenchable fire is not endless, and an undying worm not immortal. These are expressive phrases; but they are fully explained, by the references which I have made.

You accuse me, in common with Universalists, of wishing to divert the public mind, from the etymology of *aion*. Such is not the fact. The admissions of our opposers, have rendered it unnecessary to investigate its etymology. Why need we do this, when they have unitedly said, we must determine its sense from its use? When we have met it therefore, our inquiry has been; does the scope of the subject require us to understand it as endless? And such I consider is the question which claims our attention in this discussion. Do not misunderstand me—I fear nothing from an inquiry into the etymology of *aion*.

You say, that the best critics, who have

written on the subject, teach that the etymological meaning of *aion* is endless. To test this remark, let us appeal to critics. *Phavorinus* says, it means, *life, existence, eternity*. *Grove* defines it thus: *eternity; an age, life; duration or continuance of time; a period; a revolution of ages; a dispensation of Providence; this world, or life; the world or life to come*. *Parkhurst* defines it thus: *duration or continuance of time*, but with great variety. He then gives seven senses in which it is used, *two* signifying eternity and *five* a limited period. *Jones* is equally as favorable; he says, it means, *everlasting age—eternity—eis ton aion, forever—a period of time—age, life, the present world—the Jewish dispensation*. *Donnegan* says: *time; a space of time; life time, Odys. 5. 152, and 160. life, Illiad. 22. 58. Hes. Seut. 331. the ordinary period of man's life, Homer and Pindar frequently the age of man, man's estate, Illiad. 24. 725., a long period of time—eternity*. *Schweighaeuser* defines it thus: *ævum, vita, age, life*. *Valpey* defines it, *age, length of time*. *Hincks*, defines it, *a period of time, life, an age, the world, eternity; same as latin ævum, which was formed from it, by means of the digamma*. *Hedericus* says, it means, *ævum, æternitas, or age, eternity*. *Pickering* gives the definition thus: *an age, a long period of time, indefinite duration, time whether longer or shorter, past, present or future.—Schrevilius* gives the following: *ævum, mundus, sæculum, vita, or age, world, life*.

Such is the testimony of Lexicographers; and it should fill you with shame at your partial quotations. From your article one would

infer, that *aion* invariably signifies *eternity*, when in fact, this is only one among six or seven senses. Now why this shuffling? Why not give the *whole* truth? For one, I like the whole story, let it cut where it may—I crave nothing from your good graces in this matter.

If we go back to the derivation of *aion*, we shall find your position still less tenable. It is formed from *aei*, and *on*.

On signifies *being*, but does not fix its duration. It is from *eimi*, to be—*aei* is from *a* insensitive, and *eo*, to be—*a* serves to augment the signification of *eo*, and has the force of very.—*Aei* then, signifies a very long period, and as *on* adds nothing to it, *time indefinite*, or a *very long time*, is the etymological meaning of *aion*. Rose, in his Parkhurst, says: *aei* signifies, 1. *always*; as in Acts vii. 51. “Ye do *always* resist the Holy Ghost;” 2 Cor. vi. 10. “As sorrowful yet *always* rejoicing.” 2. *Always, ever*, in a restrained sense; as in Mark xv. 8. “And the multitude desired him to do as he had *ever* done unto them.” 3. *Very frequently, continually*, as in 2 Cor. iv. 11. “For we which live are *always* delivered unto death;” 2 Pet. i. 12. “to put *always* in remembrance” &c. In all these instances *aei* is used in a limited sense. How then can *aion* mean endless, when it derives its signification from *aei*?

Thus, Dear Sir, we see, that according to the etymology of *aion*, its “grammatical meaning” is *time indefinite* or *time* to be determined by the connexion in which it stands. It is proper therefore to say, the everlasting God and the everlasting hills; for *aion* is one of those words, which according to its etymology, may

be used in a variety of senses. Dr. Clarke then never expressed a greater error, than when he said, "there is no word which more forcibly points out the grand characteristic of eternity," "that endless is its grammatical meaning," "and that all others are accommodated." Its grammatical meaning is *time indefinite* or a *very long time*, as we have seen, not however, by quoting *one* word from Grove, and *one* from Parkhurst, but by giving their definitions in **FULL**, and by tracing its derivation. Hence the propriety of its various usage.

Your classification of the different senses and forms of *aion*, will enable me to present, what I wish to say on these, in a few words.

1. You say, it is 27 times rendered "this world," "the world," and "that world," and in all cases, is used in a limited sense. Now, as these passages speak of different *aions*, those past and those to come, I ask, if this usage is not proof against you? How could a word, strictly endless in its meaning, be thus variously used? You say in these 27 times, it is used *metaphorically*; but this is an assertion without proof, and against fact.

2. You say *aion* occurs 36 times in the singular, where it is used, to signify endless; and is rendered *forever*, *never*, &c. Let us test this position. Take the phrases, *since the world began*; *from the beginning of the world*; *while the world standeth*. Can we speak of the *beginning* of *eternity*, and of a period *before its beginning*? And is it correct to say, *while eternity standeth*? Such language is absurd in the highest sense, and yet you think it divine. Many of the 36 times, in which you say the sig-

nification is endless, are as evidently limited, as the instances noticed. How many eternities do you imagine there are? Perhaps we agree respecting the duration of misery; for if eternity began, it may end—so that punishment may last *through eternity*, and yet not be endless! It should be remembered, that under this head, you find *three* texts, which teach endless wo!

3. You say that *aion* is used 18 times in the plural and 6 of these are in a limited figurative sense. Figurative! It is easy to make assertions. But I deny that when Paul spoke of the *ends* of the *aions*, he spoke figuratively. I also deny that he spoke thus, when he said, “that in the *ages to come*, he might show the riches of his grace;” “but now once in the *end of the world*, hath he appeared,” &c. But you must call these *figurative*, or admit that there are eternities, and that they will end, yea, have ended already.

4. Under this head, you say, that *aion* is used in the plural form, and in an endless sense, in 12 places. But what meaneth the following: From the *beginning* of the (*aionon, eternities*) world! Besides, why did Paul, to the Col. speak of a mystery which had been hid from ages (*aionon, eternities*) and from generations? Are there past eternities? And why does Paul connect with *ages*, generations? Does not this show, that he used *aion*, in a limited sense And I would ask too, if the word in the singular means endless, how it could be used in the plural?

5. Let us briefly consider the double form of *aion*. In this you say, it occurs 23 times, and invariably means endless. But the question arises, if you have rightly defined *aion*, how?

the inspired writers could properly say, *forever and ever*? According to your views, it is *eternity and eternity*. Here then is an insurmountable objection to your definition of *aion*.

The three instances under this head, which you say teach endless woe, carry with them a refutation of such an idea; for in all three, the phrase, *day and night*, is coupled with *forever and ever*. Will time be measured in eternity by days and nights? Besides, this is not the day, to adduce texts from Revelations to prove a disputed doctrine. If Dr. Clarke could not explain the book, will you attempt it?

Here I wish the reader to observe, that you have produced only six instances, in which you say *aion* is applied to punishment, and three of these, are in the book of Revelations! What a weight of proof!

I deny, that *aion* is oftener used in an unlimited, than a limited sense. Simpson, in his essay on future punishment, says, that in seventy cases out of the hundred, it is limited.

Your position respecting *eis* governing *aion*, is utterly groundless, according to your own classification of *aion*. I have not looked the Greek Testament through, but I have found the following instances, where *eis* does not govern *aion*, in which you say it means endless. Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30; John ix. 32; Acts xv. 18; Eph. iii. 9—11—21; Col. i. 26.

If we turn to the Greek translation of the Old Testament, we find *eis* often governing *aion*, when used in a limited sense. In Exod. xxi. 6. speaking of a slave it says, he shall serve *eis ton aiona*, *forever*. Eccles. i. 4. One generation passeth away and another cometh;

but the earth abideth *eis ton aiona*, forever, not surely to eternity.

The same is true of the New Testament.—John viii. 35. The servant abideth not in the house *eis ton aiona*, forever; the son abideth *eis ton aiona*, forever. As the slave served only six years, he is said not to abide forever. See John xiv. 16.

In the light of these facts, what am I to think of your position respecting *eis*? Shall I say, it is one, which, every scholar would despise? Or shall I say, you took it, to deceive the unlearned? To your question, "what an unprejudiced man must conclude respecting *eis*," I answer, that your statement concerning it, was entirely false. Your appeal to Greek scholars, will avail nothing, unless they can read with your glasses.

I will close by asking, if *aion* means endless, why were *eti* and *epekeina* added in the following places? Exod. xv. 18. "The Lord shall reign," *ton aiona, kai ep' aiona, kai eti* from *aeon* to *aeon*, AND FURTHER. Dan. xii. 3. "And they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars," *eis tous aionas, kai eti*, through the *æons*, AND FURTHER. Mich. iv. 5. "And we will walk in the name of Jehovah our God," *eis ton aiona, kai epekeina*, through the *æon* AND BEYOND IT.

To denounce me as an ignorant impostor will not be a satisfactory answer.

As I have shown that *aion* is no proof of endless punishment, you must rest the argument of your six texts on some other point, or give them up. I am, dear sir, yours,

In the bonds of Christ,

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER NO. III.

BATIMORE, Nov. 5, 1834.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir—Agreeably to my promise I hasten to send you some remarks on the adjective *aionios*, commonly translated *eternal*. This word according to Parkhurst, is derived from the noun *aion* and signifies *eternal*, or *time without end*. There is no word, perhaps, in all the sacred writings, more unfavorable to the doctrine of Universalists than the word *aionios*; though we are frequently told, it is applied to temporal things, and, consequently cannot prove the punishment of the wicked to be *eternal*, or *endless*. Now, in order to show the reader that the word is not applied to temporal things, in any instance, in all the inspired writings, I shall refer to *all* the places where it occurs. I am not able to find, so much as one place in the New Testament, where this word has a limited signification, and does not mean endless duration. It occurs *seventy-one* times in the New Testament; and is *forty-one* times translated "*eternal*," *twenty-six* times "*everlasting*," *twice* "*before the world began*," *once* "*since the world began*," and *once* "*for ever*." It is the common adjective employed by the writers of the New Testament to teach us what is absolutely eternal. This will be manifest to any one that will pay strict attention to the use that is made of it, in all the places where it occurs. It is *forty-four* times employed to express

the *endless* duration of the life of the redeemed. I suppose no Universalist will deny that the life of the righteous is *eternal*, or will say the word has *not* an *endless* signification in this application of it. The following are the places where *aionios* is thus used:—Matt. xix. 16, 29; xxv. 46; Mark x. 17, 30; Luke x. 25; xviii. 18, 30; John iii. 15, 16, 36; iv. 14, 36; v. 24, 39; vi. 27, 40, 47, 54, 68; x. 28; xii. 25, 50; xvii. 2, 3; Acts xiii. 46, 48; Rom. ii. 7; v. 21; vi. 22, 23. Gal. vi. 8; 1 Tim. i. 16; vi. 12, 19; Tit. i. 2; iii. 7; 1 John i. 2; ii. 25; iii. 15; v. 11, 13, 20. Jud. 21. The word *aionios* is *three* times applied to the purpose of God, as I understand it, and, of course, must mean *endless* duration; as I suppose no Universalist will say the divine purpose is changeable, or fluctuating in its nature; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2; Rom. xvi. 25. The word is *three* times employed to express the *endless* duration of the glory of the saints. There can be no dispute concerning the meaning of the word here, as all christians admit the glory of heaven to be eternal; 2 Cor. iv. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 10; 1 Pet. v. 10. Thus we see the word in *fifty* instances must, unquestionably, be understood as having an unlimited signification; as no one denies the *endless* duration of God's purpose, or the saints glory and happiness.

But let us see how *aionios* is applied in the remaining *twenty-one* places. The best way to ascertain this point is, to quote the phrases where the word is used. Thus we read:—
 “The everlasting (*aioniou*) God.” Rom. xvi. 26.
 “The eternal (*aioniou*) Spirit.” Heb. ix. 14.
 “To whom be honour and power everlast-

ing" (*aionion*.) 1 Tim. vi. 16. "The blood of the everlasting (*aioniou*) covenant." Heb. xiii. 20. "Eternal (*aionion*) redemption." Heb. ix. 12. "Eternal (*aioniou*) salvation." Heb. v. 9. "Everlasting (*aionion*) Gospel." Rev. xiv. 6. "The everlasting (*aionion*) kingdom of our Lord." 2 Pet. i. 11. "The promise of eternal (*aioniou*) inheritance." Heb. ix. 15. "A house not made with hands, eternal (*aionion*) in the heavens." 2 Cor. v. 1. "They may receive you into everlasting (*aionious*) habitations." Luke xvi. 9. "Hath given us everlasting (*aionion*) consolation." 2 Thes. ii. The word *aionios* is used in Phil. 15 to express the duration of that brotherly affection which ought to exist among all true Christians. And it is once used in 2 Cor. iv. 18, to designate the endless duration of all invisible objects. In these *fourteen* cases, it cannot be denied that, the word has an unlimited signification. For I presume, no christian will say the existence of God, his Spirit, his Glory, his Honor, his Power, or his Kingdom will ever come to an end. Nor will any Universalist take it upon him to affirm that, "The covenant of grace," "The consolation of the righteous," "The inheritance of saints," "The house in the heavens," or "The habitation of glorified spirits," will, at any future period come to an end; so as to have no existence. Hence we have *fourteen* cases to add to the *fifty*, which makes *sixty-four*, leaving only *seven*, of all the places in the New Testament.

Now, the Greek adjective *aionios* occurs *seventy-one* times only in the inspired writings. It is *sixty-four* times applied to objects which

are *eternal* in their nature, and, consequently, unquestionably have an unlimited signification. It is *seven* times employed to point out the interminable duration of future punishment. I shall cite all the phrases where the word is thus applied, that the reader may examine the matter for himself, and form his own conclusions.—They are as follow:—“Everlasting (*aionion*) fire.” Matt. xviii. 8. “Everlasting (*aionion*) fire.” Matt. xxv. 41. “Everlasting (*aionion*) punishment.” Matt. xxv. 46. “Eternal (*aioniou*) damnation.” Mark iii. 29. “Everlasting (*aionion*) destruction.” 2 Thes. i. 9. “Eternal (*aioniou*) judgment.” Heb. vi. 2. “Eternal (*aioniou*) fire.” Jude 7. I believe the generality of well informed Universalists admit that, the future punishment of the wicked is intended in all these places; however, we may make a remark or two on each of them, in order to set the subject in a more luminous point of view.

With regard to the text in Matt. xviii. 8, it may be observed that, if our Lord’s admonitions in the eighth and preceding verse, be properly considered, it must be manifest that, he intended future punishment by the expressions under consideration. And, as Dr. Chauncy, an eminent Universalist, late of Boston, admits that *aionios* in this place relates to the future punishment of the wicked, it is unnecessary to say any thing more on the subject.

In order to set Matt. xxv. 41, in a proper point of light, it is necessary to remark that the paragraph, from the commencement of the 31 verse to the end of the chapter, is not a parable, as the Universalists generally hold, but a pro-

phetic description of the day of Judgment.—This is manifest from the following considerations. 1. We have no indication, directly or indirectly, in any part of the chapter, that this paragraph is a parable. 2. The true characteristic of a parable, which is a continuation of metaphors, is wanting in this passage. 3. Several phrases in the paragraph cannot be applied to any thing but the day of judgment, without doing violence to the passage. To what circumstance but the last day could the following expressions relate? “The Son of man shall come *in his glory*,”—“All the *holy angels* with him, “Before him shall be gathered *all nations*,” “Inherit the *kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world*.” If any one will have the goodness to tell me, what time, besides the day of judgment “*all nations*” shall be gathered before Christ on his throne, I am ready to give up the argument concerning this text, but if this is not done I must hold to the obvious meaning of the passage. 4. The best, and most learned commentators that I have consulted on this passage, refer it to the future judgment of the great day. Dr. Chauncy says the word in this passage relates to the punishment of sinners. From all these considerations I am induced to believe firmly that *aionios*, in this place, must be taken to express the *endless* punishment of the damned in a future state of existence.

All the above arguments will apply with equal force, to the use of the word in the 46 verse, so that nothing further need be added.

The passage in Mark iii. 29, needs no illustration. Nothing in all the world can be clear-

er, or more definite, as it stands without note or comment. The *endless* punishment of the transgressor is expressed two ways, by two different forms of speech. 1. *Negatively*, "bath *never* forgiveness." 2. *Positively*, "*eternal* damnation." This I conceive to be amply sufficient to satisfy any reasonable man.

Concerning the passage in 2 Thes. i. 9, I must say that, I can see no propriety in applying it to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army. When I consider the general design of the epistle, the phraseology contained in it, and various other circumstances connected with the people to whom it was written, I must say that, truth obliges me to apply the coming of Christ, therein mentioned, to the day of judgment, and not to any partial, or local execution of Divine justice whatever. Therefore I must consider *aionios*, in this place, as intended, by the Apostle, to signify the *endless* punishment of the ungodly. Dr. Chauncy admits that the word is so applied in this place.

The phrase "eternal judgment" in Heb. vi. 2, cannot be applied, with any show of propriety, to any thing but the future punishment of the wicked. This is evident from two considerations. 1. The order in which the phrase is placed, i. e. after "the resurrection of the dead" is mentioned. There is a beautiful gradation observable in the enumeration of the several particulars mentioned in these verses. We have them mentioned in the order, in which they are experienced by christians, as follows:—repentance, faith, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and lastly, eternal judgment. 2. The original word *krima*, here

translated "judgment," is rendered "*damnation*," in Matt. xxiii. 14; Rom. iii. 8; xiii. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 29; 1. Tim. v. 12; 2 Pet. ii. 3. And "*condemnation*" in Luke. xxiii. 40; Rom. v. 16; 1 Tim. iii. 6. So that if we were to read it in Heb. vi. 2. as it is translated in several other places of scripture, it would be "eternal damnation," or "eternal condemnation." Consequently, no doubt can remain, for a moment, on the mind of any unprejudiced scholar, but that the word *aionion*, in this place, was intended to denote the endless punishment of the wicked.

In Jude 7, we have the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah described by a figure of speech (i. e. the cities put for their inhabitants) as giving themselves up to the most abominable crimes ever practised by man. And in the same verse, the punishment consequent on such conduct is said to be "the vengeance of eternal fire;" that is, the Sodomites are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. This was declared, or made manifest for the purpose of deterring others from the commission of such crimes, that they might escape the interminable punishment due to such egregious transgressions.

The common scripture term used to express *endless* duration is *aionios*. This is as clear as language can make it, in 2 Corinthians iv. 17, 18, where the Apostle says, "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and *eternal* weight of glory: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are *temporal* (*proskaira*) or for a time; but the things which are not seen are *eternal* (*aionia*)."

Here the Apostle twice uses the word *aionios* in express opposition to other words that signify a limited duration. He contrasts the *affliction* of the *present life* with the *glory* in the *life to come*; the one is *light*, the other has a *weight* beyond excess; the one is but for a *moment* compared with the *eternal* duration of the other. Then he draws a general contrast between the *visible* things of this world and the *invisible* things of the world to come; the former are for a *time*, that is, till the day of judgment; the latter are not for a time, but *eternal*.

Now, sir, as the Apostle used this word in its proper signification in the text just quoted, is it not likely, to say the least, that he used it in the same sense in 2 Thes. i. 9. especially when we take into account the incontrovertible rule that, words are always to be understood in their proper signification, unless restricted by some word in the sentence where they occur: no such restriction is to be found in the passage in question; therefore, by every rule of sound criticism we are bound to believe that, the Apostle meant the *endless* destruction of the wicked. Get over this conclusion the best way you can.

I shall conclude this paper with a quotation, almost *verbatim* from Dr. Dwight, used on a similar occasion. "Now let me ask, whether a man, even of moderate understanding, could be supposed to write with scrupulous integrity a system of theology, and employ this term *sixty-four* times to denote endless duration, and *seven* times to denote that which was infinitely different, without giving any notice of its restricted meaning, while the subject to which it

is applied is of immeasurable importance to those for whom he wrote. If such a man cannot be supposed thus to use language, nor vindicate it when used in this manner, can such conduct be attributed safely to the spirit of God?"

I am yours, &c.

JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER No. III.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir—It is universally admitted that no adjective can signify more than the noun from which it is formed. All the arguments therefore which I have brought to prove the limitation of *aion*, may be applied with equal propriety to *aionios*; for if the former is limited, the latter must be. Hence Donnegan defines it; of long duration; *eternal—lasting; permanent*. Jones defines it—*everlasting, ancient*. Parkhurst defines it—*eternal, having neither beginning nor end, duration of the world, ages of the world, the times since the beginning of existence*. Cruden defines it the same as *aion*. Hincks says, it is *eternal, the time since the beginning of the world*. Here we again discover your partial quotations from Lexicographers. Why not give the whole truth? Do you fear the light?

Such being the meaning, of *aionios*, we can see no difficulty whatever in the word. As it is used in a variety of senses, its signification, like *aion*,

must be determined by its use. But you say, there is not an instance where it is limited or applied to things temporal. This, dear sir, was an unguarded remark, and shows a determination to bend every passage where it occurs to your use. The position however, shall be fully tested before we close.

You say "*aionios* is *forty-four* times used to express the duration of the life of the righteous." Now I can hardly believe you serious in this; for it seems that you cannot have read the New Testament without discovering, that the phrase, (*zoeon aionion*) *eternal life*, is a general term, used to denote the happiness enjoyed in this world, through faith in Christ, and often the happiness of the christians after the close of the old dispensation. I will not assert that this is the case with all your *forty-four* instances, but I will say, these are the general senses of the phrase. That I am right is evident from the following considerations:

1. Believers are represented as *having* eternal life. He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life, John 3. 36. He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me *hath* everlasting life, John 5. 24. Verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me, *hath* everlasting life, John 6. 47. See also verse 54, chap. x. 28; xii. 50; xvii. 3. *Aionios* is the adjective in all these cases; and as you admit that believers can fall from grace, the word can be no proof of the endless duration of the life.

2. *Having eternal life* and *entering into eternal life* are synonamous with *seeing and entering* the kingdom of Christ. Compare Matt. xix. 16, with verses 23 and 24, where *having*

eternal life is used as synonymous with entering Christ's kingdom. Now all admit that to enter this kingdom, is to become a disciple of Jesus, to believe his doctrine and imitate his example. See Matt. iii. 2.; iv. 17; xii. 28; xxi. 43. Luke ix. 27; xxi. 16. where kingdom of God signifies the Church or reign of Christ.—Hence the Savior said in reference to the young man, who asked what he should do to inherit eternal life, “how hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven;” meaning, how difficult it is for the rich to become christians.

3. The phrase *everlasting life*, occurs but once in the Old Testament; and there (Dan. 12. 2.) it is set in contrast with the shame and contempt which the Jews were to experience for their rejection of Christ. Now as the shame was to be experienced on earth, why might not the life be here enjoyed? The contrast would be wrong, if such were not the case.

4. Eternal life is a life to which some were ordained. “And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed” Acts. xiii. 48. Now if eternal life, here signifies endless blessedness, you must admit the old doctrine of election. Armenians have uniformly explained such texts as referring to a temporary election in this life, for a specific purpose. Are you prepared to deny their views, and to reconcile with goodness and wisdom, an arbitrary partial election to endless life?

5. If *everlasting life*, means endless happiness, why did Jesus, after saying, “he gave his sheep *eternal life*,” add, “and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand?” These additional remarks, show, that

eternal life was used simply to express the life of faith; for it would be useless and absurd to say of a soul after it was perfected in glory, it shall never perish, and none shall pluck it from the hand of Christ.

For the five foregoing reasons, I must dissent entirely, from your position, that *aionios* "is forty-four times used to express the endless duration of the life of the redeemed." It is an assumption sustained by no proof, but popular prejudice. You must therefore reckon again to make out your forty-four instances, where *aionios* is admitted by all to be endless. Universalists admit nothing of the kind.

You say that *aionion* is three times applied to God's purpose. But such is not the fact. The literal meaning of 2 Tim. 1. 9. is "according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, *before the aionion times.*" Now if *aionion* here means eternity, this purpose was formed before eternity; and as this cannot be, *aionion* is here used in a limited sense to denote what God purposed before the commencement of time. Besides, nothing is said of an *aionion* purpose. The other two instances are the same. Here then are three more cases to be deducted from your calculations. What an absurdity to say *before eternity*!

On the three instances in which you say *aionios* refers to the endless glory of the saints, I will make no remarks; for I can see no bearing they can have on this discussion. That *aionios* is sometimes used in an unlimited sense we admit. But conceding these, your fifty instances are cut down to a small number. In

what light now does your remark appear, that *aionios* is never used in a limited sense?

There remain of the seventy-one places where *aionios* occurs, but twenty-one to be considered. As fourteen of these have no reference to punishment, I will pass them by simply asking

1. If any thing more can be intended by the phrase, *everlasting Gospel*, than that the Gospel should be preached to the end of time, and that it should never be succeeded by another?
2. Can people in this world, be said to *have* endless consolation? And does not the absurdity of this idea, show, that everlasting consolation simply means, the great and permanent consolation of christians? Remember—they *had* this everlasting consolation, and that christians can fall from grace.
3. How can Christ's kingdom be called endless, when he says, he shall deliver it up to the Father? See 1 Cor. xv.
4. By what authority do you refer the phrase *everlasting habitations* to the future world? Have men the control of the kingdom of endless blessedness? Can they admit and refuse whom they please?
5. Onesimus was a fellow laborer with Philemon, and the son of Paul in the faith. For a time, he departed from Philemon, but returned by the advice of Paul. Hence it is said; "he departed for a season, that Philemon should receive him *forever*." But can any thing more be intended, than that they should continue without interruption fellow laborers? Surely in this instance *aionios*, at most, can only mean the life of man. Thus we have five cases to take from your fourteen.

We will now examine your seven texts, where *aionios* is applied to punishment. Your

remark that the best informed Universalists generally refer these to future punishment, is another proof of your imperfect knowledge of our faith.

1. On Matt. xviii. 8. I will only ask 1. What can Christ mean by *entering life maimed*? 2. What can he mean by being cast into *fire* with *two hands* and *two eyes*? 3. Should you say he speaks figuratively, and means by being maimed separated from his friends, I would ask, how entering heaven, without friends, could be called entering maimed? According to this every christian goes to heaven maimed. But here is a difficulty; for this would make sinners go to hell maimed, inasmuch as they would leave friends behind. 4. When Jesus says it were better to be drowned in the depth of the sea, than to offend one of these little ones (v. 6.) does he not refer to the same punishment as that in v. 8? These questions show that Jesus was merely speaking of the opposition to his cause, of the importance of believing in him, even if it displeased connexions, and of the judgment that would come on the offenders. They had better enter his kingdom without friends, and against their will, than to be destroyed with them. Fire is a common figure to express the temporal punishments to come on the Jews. See Matt. 3. 10; xiii. 42; xxv. 41; vii. 9. *Eis to pur to aionion* or *everlasting fire* then, can be no proof of endless misery; for it is seen to refer to a particular judgment upon the Jews.

What Dr. Chauncy's notions have to do with this or any other text, as it respects our discussion I am unable to conceive. I hope therefore

in future, you will give us your *reasons*, and not the unsupported opinions of other men.

2 & 3. Let us now consider Matt. xxv. 41, and on to end of the chap. This you say is not a parable, 1. Because there is no indication of it. That is easily said, but what does v. 33. mean? "He will set the sheep on the right and the goats on the left." Now if you are correct, we need discuss the subject no further; for it refers not to men, but to sheep and goats. The *sheep* shall go into life eternal, and the *goats* into everlasting punishment. The sheep fed the hungry, clothed the naked, &c. while the goats were wanting in these kind offices. A kingdom was prepared for the sheep; but the goats were to be penned with the devil.

Again; you say many phrases in this scripture, such as *come in his glory—holy angels—all nations*, &c. can only be applied to a general judgment. See Matt. xvi. 28. where Christ was to come in the glory of his Father with his angels to *reward every man* according to his work, before those to whom he spoke, tasted death. See also Matt. 24. 30—34. where it is said, all the tribes of the earth should mourn; Christ should come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; send out his angels to gather his elect from one end of Heaven to the other; and all before the generation then living passed away. But you knew all this before; you were not ignorant of our views on this subject; for you have read my sermon on Matt. 25. 31—46. Why then bring up these old arguments, which we have refuted, without replying to what we have said? You lay great stress upon the phrase *all nations*; but is there more difficulty

in understanding that, than the phrases, *reward every man—all the tribes of the earth shall mourn—gather his elect from one end of heaven to the other?* You think there is a difficulty in the phrase, “inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” But did not the disciples have a kingdom; and one too prepared for them? This dear sir, is in favor of our views. Besides, Jesus told his disciples that he would appoint to them a kingdom, as his Father had appointed one to him. Thus every circumstance connected with this scripture, shows, that *aionios* is limited. What you say about Chauncy, and the best of commentators is entirely foreign from the question. Further, it is not true, for Pearce and Cappe explain the subject as universalists do.

4. Mark iii. 29. next claims our attention. Here you find two forms of speech, *negative and positive*, which teach endless misery. Now I consider this uncandid; for as you read the Greek, you must have known that the original will bear no such construction. *Aion* and *aionios* both occur in this text, but only one (*aionios*) is translated. According to the original, it reads, “but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath not forgiveness unto (*aioni*) the age, but is obnoxious to the *aionion* judgment. This destroys your *negative* argument. It is not an unlimited, but a limited negative. Now as we must believe, that Mark uses *aion* in the same sense as Matthew, we feel justified in saying, *unto the aion*, means unto the christian *aion* or dispensation. This accords with Matthew—neither in this *age* (the Jewish) neither in the *age* to come, (the christian.) Hence the damnation

of which Mark speaks, is under the new dispensation. This he calls *aionion*. *Aionion* remember, is formed from *aion*; and as *aion* is used to signify age, an *aionion* damnation must be the damnation of an age. Such was the damnation of those, who sinned against the Holy Ghost. According to this explanation Matthew and Mark agree.

One word as to this sin. To justify your interpretation, it would be necessary to prove, that the sin was infinite; otherwise it would not deserve an endless punishment. But this text refutes the idea, that sin is infinite; and shows, that the common method of proving its infinity is incorrect. For as the sin against the Holy Ghost, was greater than against the Son of man, because committed against greater light, sin takes its magnitude from the knowledge of the sinner, and not from the greatness of God.—Hence it cannot be infinite; and if so, its punishment must be limited.

5. I regard your manner of alluding to 2 Thess. 1. 9. as virtually giving up the text. It is true you have offered a few remarks expressive of your *opinion*, but not a word have you said respecting my reply to the propositions of your first letter on the text. Neither have you answered my four questions; and until this is done, I shall consider that the subject, as it respects 2 Thess. 1. 9. is settled. Dr. Chauncy's admission is nothing.

6. Heb. vi. 2. is your next proof text. To understand this we must consider the verse preceeding. I suppose you will admit, that Clarke is correct in saying, "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," might be rendered, "the

discourse of the beginning of Christ, as in the margin." In the previous chapter, much is said respecting Christ and his priesthood; and the Hebrews are charged with being ignorant of what was contained in the Old Testament, or oracles of God concerning it. See Psal. cx. and Isai. liii. where the order and duration of Christ's priesthood is described. Their ignorance of this, caused the Apostle to call them babes.

The 6th chap. commences: Leaving the discourse of the beginning of Christ, let us go on to perfection; that is, let us not stop at what David and Isai. have said about Christ, but let us go on to perfection in the Christian doctrines. Suppose by principles, the leading doctrines of the Gospel are intended; how could we *leave* these, and go on to perfection? It is abiding by these, that perfects the Christian character. Hence Paul not only exhorts them to leave or waive what had been said respecting the genealogy and priesthood of Christ, but not to lay again the foundation of repentance, of faith, baptism, &c. Here he mentions other doctrines, peculiar to the Jews, besides those respecting Christ, to which they must not return. That I am right, is evident from verses 4, 5, 6, where Paul speaks of apostacy and the awful consequences which would result from it. The situation then of the Hebrew christians and the whole discourse concerning them, justifies us in our application of the 1st and 2d verses. Should there still be doubts on this subject, they will be removed by considering, that all the particulars mentioned were held by the Jews, com-

prehended the outlines of Judaism, and were the very points, to which Apostates would return.

1. *Repentance*: This was a Jewish doctrine, as appears from Lev. xvi. 21, 22, 29, 30. 2. *Faith towards God*: this was purely Jewish; for under the old dispensation, faith was required to be in God, while under the new, it is required to be in Christ. 3. *Baptisms*: He speaks in the plural, showing that he refers to the Jewish baptisms, for they are always spoken of in the plural; while the christian baptism is spoken of in the singular. Paul in Heb. 9. 10 speaks of *divers baptisms*. 4. *Laying on of hands*, was a common ceremony among the Jews. 5. *The resurrection of the dead*. In chap. xi. Paul refers to the raising of the dead mentioned in 1 Kings xvii. 21. 2 Kings iv. 24. And that this is his reference here is evident from the fact, that these were regarded as convincing proofs, that Judaism was true. 6. *Eternal judgment*: This was a doctrine of the Jews as appears from the tremendous judgments upon Sodom and Gomorrah, upon Pharoah and his host, and upon the Israelites in the wilderness. That the word rendered everlasting was used by them in a limited sense is evident from Exod. 14. 13; Prov. 22. 28; Jer. 18. 15; Ezek. 36. 2. To your definition of *krima* I have no objection. I will only observe, it is often used to denote temporal judgment, as 1 Pet. 4. 17; 1 Cor. 2. 29.

Having fully proved that all the six particulars were Jewish doctrines, I will ask you to point out a judgment in the Old Testament where endless misery is taught. Then you

will do something towards proving that *aionios* is here used in an endless sense.

7. Jude 7, is your last text. On this I will only ask 1. If endless misery be here intended, how could Jude say, "I will put you in remembrance though you once knew this?" How could they know it, for in Genesis and Zeph where the destruction of these cities is recorded, not a word is said respecting endless misery?—2. These cities were *set forth* for an example, suffering the vengeance, &c; but if this vengeance is beyond this world, how could they be *set forth*? These cities were destroyed by fire from heaven, and this, Jude calls an eternal fire. Surely then, it cannot be in the spiritual world. 3. If the people of these cities were sent to an endless hell, why did God hide from Abraham what he was about to do? If you say he did not, I ask why the sacred historian has hidden it from us? The reason why the people are said to suffer is, because they, as well as their cities, perished by fire from heaven.

At the conclusion of your letter not a little uneasiness is discovered respecting 2. Thes. i. 9. And the argument by which you endeavor to redeem the text is singular as it is novel.—

Finding nothing in the connexion to favor your views, and being unable to answer my four questions, you first assert that *aionios* is the common word for endless. That it is often used in this sense is admitted; but according to its etymology and lexicographers, I am justified in asserting, that wherever it means endless, the connexion requires it, and that of itself it only means *continued existence*. Besides,

when the inspired writers would express the endless felicity of heaven, they use such words as *endless, incorruptible, immortal, &c.* words strictly unequivocal in their meaning; and when *aionios* is used, it is under circumstances which show it endless. This is the case with 2. Cor. iv. 17, 18, where temporal things are contrasted with spiritual, temporal afflictions with unfading glory. Now, the very contrast, together with the nature of things spiritual, shows them endless, so that these determine the sense of *aionios*. Show that the connexion of 2 Thes. i. 9, requires that *aionios* should be considered as endless, and you will gain your point. But this you cannot do; for if you could you would not have resorted to 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18, for proof. Therefore 'by every rule of sound criticism, we are bound' to say *aionion* destruction, is not an endless one.

As I have refuted all your positions respecting *aionios*, your quotation from Dwight, supposes a case which does not exist.

I intended to bring forward some arguments from *olam*, its various renderings, and its translation by the lxx, and the use of *æion* and *aionios* by the christian fathers in the second, third and fourth centuries, but I must defer these for a future letter.

I am sincerely,

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER NO. IV.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 11, 1834.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir:—In consequence of a call to perform some ministerial duties at some distance from this city, I was deprived of a sight of the *second* and *third* numbers of the “Pioneer” till a late hour last night. I have just glanced over them, by which I perceive that you were too soon elated with the idea that I had given up some texts because I had not noticed your questions in my *third* letter. But I intend that your glorying in this respect shall not continue long. The fact is my *third* letter was written before I saw the *first* number of your paper; and this is the reason I have not reviewed your remarks. These shall be duly attended to, if spared, in my next communication. For the present, I would say, that I shall not attempt to answer all the *trifling* and *unnecessary* questions that you may ask, which can only darken and conceal the subject at issue from the public mind. I want truth brought out in as short and clear a manner as possible. I am ready to answer any interrogation that may be appropriate, or may cast light on the present controversy.—This is precisely the course I wish you to pursue with me. I might ask you 500 questions concerning a subject, which, probably, could not be answered by any man living; but, would this be a proper reason why I should require you to relinquish the subject altogether? Cer-

tainly not. In this paper, I shall attend to a question you ask me, in your *first* letter, respecting the use I have made of the word *Gehenna*. One would be ready to conclude, from reading your remarks, that I introduced this word into the present discussion; but, those who may read all the letters on both sides will see that you *first* used the word; however, as this is a matter of little, or no consequence, I shall say no more about it, but proceed to a consideration of the term, *Gehenna*.

The word *Gehenna* is taken from the two Hebrew words, *Ghi*, a valley, and *Hinnom*, the name of a person who once possessed it. This valley of *Hinnom* lay near Jerusalem, and had formerly been the place of those abominable sacrifices, wherein, the idolatrous Jews burned their children alive to Molech, Baal, or the Sun. See the accounts of those infernal impieties recorded in 2 Kings xxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; Jer. vii. 31, 32; xix. 5, 6; xxxii. 35. A certain place in the valley was called *Tophet* from the Hebrew word *tophet*, a *fire-stove*, in which as some think, the Jews burned their children to *Molech*. Sometimes the valley itself is called the valley of *Tophet*. Cruden observes that it is thought "the name of *Tophet* is given to the valley of *Hinnom*, because of the sacrifices that were offered there to the god Molech, by beat of drum, which in Hebrew is called *Toph*. It was in this manner that these sacrifices were offered: The statue of Molech was of brass, hollow within, with its arms extended, and stooping a little forward. They lighted a great fire within the statue, and another before it. They put upon its arms the

child they intended to sacrifice, which soon fell into the fire at the foot of the statue, putting forth cries, as may easily be imagined. To stifle the noise of these cries and howlings, they made a great rattling of drums, and other instruments, that the spectators might not be moved with compassion at the clamours of these miserable victims. And this as they say, was the manner of sacrificing in Tophet." This valley was defiled by king Josiah, 2 King, xxiii. 10, and made a receptacle of the filth and the dead carcases of the city. Worms bred in the carcases, in great abundance, and fires were kept up continually to consume them. All these circumstances made it a place of the utmost horror and detestation to the imagination, so that it became a very appropriate emblem of hell. And the name of this place was afterwards frequently applied to the place of endless punishment, both by the Jews and our blessed Saviour. The term Gehenna occurs in the New Testament only *twelve* times, and is always rendered *hell*; however, for the convenience of the reader I shall cite all the words both in the Greek and the English. They are as follow :—Matt. v. 22. *eis ten gehennan tou puros, of hell-fire.* Matt. v. 29. *eis gehennan, into hell.* Matt. v. 30. *eis gehennan, into hell.* Matt x. 28. *en gehenne, in hell.* Matt. xviii. 9. *eis ten gehennan tou puros, into hell fire.* Matt. xxiii. 15. *gehennes, hell.* Matt. xxiii. 33 *tes gehennes, hell.* Mark ix. 43. *eis ten gehennan, into hell.* Mark ix. 45. *eis ten gehennan, into hell.* Mark ix. 47. *eis ten gehennan, into hell.* Luke xii. 5. *eis ten gehennan, into hell.* Jam. iii. 5. *tes gehennes, of hell.*

Now sir, I assert once for all, and that without fear of successful contradiction, that the word *Gehenna* is used in every instance, in the New Testament to signify the place of *endless* punishment. My reasons for making this declaration are the following;—

1. The Jews, to whom were committed the oracles of God, understood it in this sense. See *Chald.* on *Is.* xxxiv. 14. where *mokedey olam* is rendered “the *Gehenna* of everlasting fire.” The most learned Jews in our Saviour’s time employed the word to signify hell, the place of the damned. This application of it may be seen in the *Chaldee Targums* on *Ruth* ii. 12; *Ps.* cxl. 12; *Is.* xxvi. 15; xxxiii. 14. And also in the *Jerusalem Targum*, and that of *Jonathan Ben ziel*, on *Gen.* iii. 24. and xv. 17.

2. Josephus, who was one of the most learned Jews, and a contemporary of our Saviour, understood the word as signifying *endless* punishment in a future state. When speaking of the transactions of the day of judgment, and particularly of the justice of Christ on that occasion, he observes that, this principle will be manifest in “allotting to the lovers of wicked works *eternal* punishment. To these belong the *unquenchable fire*, and that without end, and a certain *fiery worm never dying*, and not destroying the body, but continuing its eruption out of the body with never ceasing grief.” *Discourse on Hades, Whiston’s Translation.* I do not consider Josephus as an inspired writer; but, I regard him as a proper evidence to prove what were the views of the Jews in his day, regarding the application of *fire* and *worms* to the fu

ture punishment of the wicked. Our Saviour being a Jew, must have used the words as they were then commonly understood, otherwise, his language would tend rather to deceive than instruct.

3. Mr. Parkhurst, one of the most learned men that ever wrote on the original scriptures, in his *Lexicon*, says that, “ *Gehenna tou puros*, *A Gehenna of fire*, Matt. v. 22., does, in its outward and primary sense, relate to that dreadful doom of being burned alive in *the valley of Hinnom*. Though this, as well as the other degrees of punishment mentioned in the context, must, as *Doddridge* has remarked, be ultimately referred to the *invisible world*, and to the future vengeance of an offended God.” He affirms that the word commonly denotes immediately *hell, the place, or state of the damned*.

4. The sense of all the passages where this word occurs in the New Testament requires the signification which I have affixed to it; to say the least, the word may be fairly understood, in every place, to relate to future punishment. In Matt. v. 22. the word may literally refer to the condemnation of the Sanhedrim and the fire in the valley at Jerusalem, but it must in a secondary sense relate to *endless* punishment in a future state. The *foot, hand, eye*, &c. mentioned in Matt. v. 29, 30; xviii. 9; Mark ix. 43, 45, 47., are metaphorical expressions employed to denote such sinful propensities and practices as we love equally dear with those various members of the body. All such sins must be given up to ensure eternal life; if this is not done, the sinner with all his malevolent propensities and vile dispositions shall be cast into the

fire of an interminable hell, where their worm dieth *not* and their fire is *not* quenched! In Matt. x. 28. the destruction mentioned is not inflicted by men, but by God only; therefore, *gehenna* must, in this place, necessarily signify the punishment of the wicked in a future state. In Luke xii. 5. the casting into Gehenna, is after the death of the body, and the act cannot be performed by any but God, for which reason he is a peculiar object of fear; hence, it is not the burning of a dead carcase that is intended here, but the destruction of the soul in endless misery. The phrases, "child of hell," Matt. xxiii. 15. "damnation of hell," Matt. v. 33. "set on fire of hell," Jam. iii. 6. must, undoubtedly be understood as relative to the world of endless wo. Any literal interpretation would do violence to the passages that would be highly reprehensible.

I shall close these remarks for the present by making an observation in relation to Paul not using the word *Gehenna*. First. The Jews were well acquainted with the word *Gehenna* and its signification. Second. The Gentiles were unacquainted both with the word and its signification. Third. Paul was the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, not of the Jews, and on this ground I account for his not using the word *Gehenna*. Fourth. James in his epistle which was written "to the twelve tribes" of Jews that were scattered abroad, uses the word *Gehenna*, because they were familiarly acquainted both with the word and its signification.

A few strictures on your letters may be expected before long. Yours, sincerely, &c.

JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER NO. IV.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 22, 1834.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

I am unable to express my surprise, that you should charge me with glorying that you had given up *some texts*, and with asking *trifling* and *unnecessary* questions. I know that when faithfully wielded, the sword of truth, can demolish the strong holds of error and disperse its advocates; but I was not prepared to hear from *you* charges of this nature. Fear for the safety of a long cherished system, renders uncertain the powers of vision and reason; and in this instance it seems to have multiplied 2 Thes. i. 9. into several texts, and changed a refusal to consider it, until my four propositions were answered, into shouts of victory. As it respects my questions, you can answer them or not—they will have their weight with the reader, however often you may denounce them as *trifling* and *unnecessary*.

Believing your derivation of Gehenna correct, I will proceed to consider your proofs for saying, it invariably signifies endless punishment.

1. The *Targums*: “Targum is a name given to the Chaldee paraphrases of the books of the Old Testament. They are called paraphrases or expositions, because they are rather comments and explications than literal translations of the text. They were written in Chaldee because this was better known to the Jews than Hebrew after the time of their captivity

in Babylon." The most ancient of these are the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan. See Prideaux, Buck and Watson. Jahn says, the Targum of Onkelos was written in the third or second century of the christian era. That of Jonathan Ben Uzziel was written, he says, towards the close of the third century; and the Jerusalem Targum is still more modern. This opinion of Jahn has the sanction of the most eminent writers.

The Targums therefore, furnish no proof whatever, that Gehenna was used to signify endless wo, in the days of Christ. Your assertion then, that the most learned Jews used Gehenna in this sense, is entirely unfounded.

2. Your quotation from Josephus is now universally considered the work of some christian writer of, perhaps, the second or third century. Josephus never uses Gehenna in those passages which speak of the state of the wicked after death. Add to this the fact, that the Jewish sects, in the days of Josephus, did not represent future punishment by the emblem of fire, which is the sense in which Gehenna is used in the Targums, and by the christian writers of the third and fourth centuries, and you will see that he is against you.

3. It is news to me, "that Parkhurst is one of the most learned men who ever wrote;" and as his *opinion*, was formed from a mistaken idea respecting the dates of the Targums, it can have but little weight with the unprejudiced and enlightened. At most, it is but the *opinion* of a man; and if you have no better proof than this, we had better relinquish our discussion.

As then, there is no proof that Gehenna in

the days of Christ had acquired a signification different from what it had in the Old Testament, we must go back to this to ascertain the sense in which it is used. Here it occurs in two senses, 1. For the literal valley of Hinnom 2. As a figure to represent the temporal punishment, that God was to bring on the Jewish nation. See Josh. xv. 8 ; xviii. 16 ; Neh. xi. 30. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3 ; xxiii. 6. Jer. xxxii. 35. where it signifies the valley of Hinnom.— See Jer. vii. 29—34 and xix. 4—15. where it is used figuratively, to represent the destruction of the Jewish nation. Let us observe here the exact language of the Prophet. He says, the valley shall no more be called Tophet nor Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter, that the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem shall be made void, that they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, that their carcasses shall be meat for fowls and beasts, and that in their siege they shall eat their sons and daughters, and that they shall bury in Tophet till there is no place to bury. Now this prediction had a literal fulfilment, at the destruction of Jerusalem, when six hundred thousand bodies were suffered to lie unburied and were meat for fowls and beasts, when parents feasted upon their children, their land became desolate and their city as Tophet.

In connexion with this prophecy, let us consider, that in all the places where Gehenna is used in the New Testament, it was spoken to Jews, who were familiar with the old Testament. Must they not then have understood it in the sense of the Old Testament? And if our Lord did not use it in this sense, “did he not deceive rather than instruct”?

In Matt. x. 28, some difficulty exists in con-

sequence of the translation. There is however the same difficulty in applying this to the future state, that there is Matt. v. 29, 30, for as the body remains in this world, it cannot be destroyed in the future. Now the soul was to be destroyed in the *same hell* with the *body*.—"Destroy both soul and body in hell." Gehenna therefore, cannot here mean endless punishment. Having rescued this text from your hands, I will offer a few remarks for the reader's satisfaction.

The disciples of Christ were as sheep in the midst of wolves; and they were told to beware of men, who would deliver them up to councils, scourge them in synagogues, and bring them before governors. These however they should not fear; for they could only kill or torture the body; but they should fear God whose power is almighty. And to stimulate them to this, Christ describes the superintending Providence of Jehovah, his watchful care over them, and the awful punishment which would await those, who should through fear of men, renounce the Gospel. This punishment he confines to that age. He says, "ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. Verily ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." He also says, 'those who would seek to save their lives should lose them; but those who would lose their lives, or have no fear of men, should save them. Hence the command, "Fear not them which kill or torture the body, but fear him who is able to inflict a punishment far more dreadful than the torture of men—a punishment represented by

that awful figure—*Gehenna*. The whole chapter therefore, shows that Christ was speaking of the judgment at the overthrow of Jerusalem; and that *Gehenna* was figurative. The judgment should come *before they had gone over* the cities of Israel.

It only remains to consider the difficulty arising from the translation. 1. The word *kill* (*apokteino*.) This must be translated to agree with the power of the Jews; and as they had not the power of taking life, it cannot properly be rendered *kill*. They could persecute, scourge and deliver up to the Romans, but they could not kill. See John xviii. 31. where it is said, they had not this power. *Apokteino* then, should be rendered to torture or afflict, which is nearly its sense in Romans vii. 11; 2 Cor. iii. 6. 2. The word *soul* (*psuho*.) That this means simply the animal life, is evident from a verse following (v. 39) the one under consideration, where it is twice so rendered. See also Mark iii. 4; Matt. xvi. 25, 26; Luke xvii. 28; John xii. 25. Giving *psuho* this translation, avoids the absurdity of saying, God would destroy an immortal principle. Fear not them, who are only able to torture the body, but fear him, who is able to destroy the life and body in *Gehenna*; that is, destroy the whole man. This agrees with the expression, cast the *whole body* into *Gehenna*.

As Matt. xviii. 9 is a repetition of what has been considered, we need only remark, that it speaks of being cast with two eyes or the whole body into *Gehenna*. The same is true of Mark ix. 43, 45 and Luke xii. 5. They are repetitions of language which we have already explained.

If we turn to Matt. xxiii. 33. we shall find these views confirmed: "Ye serpents ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" The word hell is *Gehenna*; and that it was applied to Jews is evident from the verses preceding: "Ye are the children of them that killed the Prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." This is the only instance, where our Lord ever threatened the Jews with the *damnation of Gehenna*. What this damnation was, we learn from the verses following, where Christ declares "that upon the Jews should come all the righteous blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias; and affirms, that the whole should come upon *that generation*. Here then, is *one* instance where, without doubt, *Gehenna* signifies temporal punishment. All these things—the *damnation of Gehenna*, and all the woes denounced in this chapter, should come on *that* generation. Is not this a successful contradiction of your position?

I will now call your attention to the instances, where *Gehenna* was addressed to the disciples. There are nine of these. To present them in their true light, it is necessary to observe, that the disciples were often encouraged to bear with patience their trials, by reference to the approaching calamities of the Jews, and the rewards which awaited believers in Christ. And nothing could be more natural, than such encouragements; for what were the afflictions of the Christians compared with the awful judgments that overwhelmed the Jews? As these judgments were called the damnation of hell, it is rational to suppose, that our Lord would

refer to this damnation, when addressing his disciples and exhorting them to faithfulness.

I shall first consider the texts which refer to this. They are Matt. v. 29, 30; x. 28; xviii. 9. Mark ix. 43, 45 and Luke xii. 5. There are certain phrases in these texts, which cannot be reconciled with the idea, that a future endless hell is intended. For instance—it is profitable that *one* of thy *members* should perish, and not that thy *whole body* should be *cast into hell*—destroy *soul and body in hell*—enter *life maimed*—*having two hands to go into hell*—*worm dieth not and fire is not quenched*. These expressions cannot be literally understood; and they give to the texts a figurative signification. Now if the hand, foot, eye and body, together with the worm and fire, are to be understood figuratively, why should not Gehenna also? If it be not, it differs from all other places, where it occurs in the New Testament. Besides, the *worm* and *fire* are both borrowed from Gehenna in the old Testament; and as they are figures, Gehenna must be.

In Matt. v. 29, 30, the Savior speaks twice of casting the *whole body into hell*. Now as nothing is said of spirit, but as body is mentioned, it seems impossible to resist the conviction, that Gehenna has no reference to endless wo. *Whole body!* The body is not cast into a spiritual, future hell. This we know. We know therefore, that Gehenna cannot in this place mean endless suffering. Understand it then, as used by Jeremiah, and there is a propriety in its meaning, which none could mistake and a power which none could resist.

Having considered all the instances where Gehenna is used as a figure of judgment upon the Jews, I will briefly notice the three remaining cases, where it occurs. In Matt. v. 22, it is used in a manner which clearly teaches its meaning. Jesus speaks of three sins; and in describing their punishment refers to three kinds of punishment among the Jews—the *Judgment*, *Council* and *Gehenna*. The 1st was beheading; the 2d stoning; and the third burning alive in Gehenna. Now as he spoke of three sins of different magnitude, and employed three figures to represent their punishment, it is evident that he had no reference to endless misery. We might as well say, by Judgment and Council he intended to teach endless wo, as by Gehenna. But as none believe the former teach endless wo, why believe the latter does? Besides, the first sin, bore the same proportion to the second, that the second did to the third; and so it must be with the punishment. But where is the proportion between endless and limited misery?—Gehenna then, cannot here signify endless punishment.

On Matt. xxiii. 15, I will only say, “two fold more the child of hell,” must mean, *doubly* deserving the punishment of Gehenna. What this punishment was can be learnt from the woes denounced in the chapter—woes that were to come on the generation then living. See v. 36.

James iii. 6, is the last text. “The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.” The author of these words was a Jew, and wrote to believing Jews.

To these no figure could be employed to express greater wickedness and misery, than the valley of Hinnom. Therefore, when he would show the evils of the tongue, he borrows a figure from this place, as it was the most abominable of any known to the Jews.

Thus, dear sir, do we see, that not a single instance can be found, where Gehenna means endless punishment. By adopting this view of the word, we can rationally account for the fact, that it was only used by Christ and James, and that it is not to be found, in the Gospel of John. Christ and James addressed Jews, and hence they spoke of Gehenna. John wrote his Gospel for the Gentiles, and therefore says nothing of Gehenna. Paul was the Apostle of the Gentiles—hence the reason that *he* never preached Gehenna. If this be not proof, that the present use of the word was unknown in the Apostolic age, I know not the nature of proof.

You say, the Gentiles were unacquainted with the word. *Unacquainted!* When Paul preached among them twenty or thirty years, and wrote fourteen epistles!! Let a Methodist Minister go among a people ignorant of the word hell, and how long do you fancy, they would remain thus? If the Gentiles were ignorant of Gehenna, and Paul declared the whole counsel of God, he would have instructed them respecting it, had he believed it to be a place of undying wo. They were ignorant of Christ, repentance and salvation, and he taught them.

The word hell not *once* used to the Gentiles! And yet the Gospel spread among them as on wings of light. Say not then, that our silence respecting hell, has a licentious tendency. Fi-

nally sir, you may as well argue against the sun, as against the fact, that Gehenna was only addressed to those familiar with the Prophets and connected with the Jewish nation; for had it signified a punishment to which Gentiles as well as Jews were exposed, they would have been instructed respecting it, and warned of their danger. I am, very respectfully, your friend,

OTIS A. SKINNER

LETTER NO. V.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 27, 1834.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner;

Dear Sir:—On reading your *first* letter, I find a large quantity of extraneous matter, which can shed no light on the point at issue between us, but must necessarily bewilder and darken it more or less. What has the present controversy to do with the ‘eternal decrees,’ ‘infinite sin,’ ‘infants’ skulls,’ the damnation or salvation of the Heathen,’ &c. The subject before us is ‘Universalism,’ which, I suppose may be embraced in the question, whether the punishment due to sin, is *eternal or temporary*, in its nature. You hold the latter. I hold the former. Therefore, all we say should have a direct bearing on this subject; which I consider to be of paramount importance. You state that there is but a trifling difference between Universalists. All believe that punishment is designed to re-

form." Now I believe that all chastisements and afflictions in this life are designed to reform. So far I agree with Universalists. But, I believe that all punishment in a future state of existence is *vindictive* and not *disciplinary*. On this point I differ with the Universalists. I purpose attending to this point, in a future letter, if permitted.

I shall attend to your *four* questions concerning 1 Thess. i 5—10, at a future period. As there is nothing else of any importance, in this letter, I shall dismiss it for the present, and proceed to the consideration of your *second* letter.

You appear greatly dissatisfied with my manner of quoting authorities, and speak in as strong terms as if you had convicted me of fraudulent dealing; but, I can see no reason for all this warmth and dissatisfaction only that the truth pinches a little too tight. If you can show that I have perverted the views of an authority, or given that for his language which was not his, I am ready to stand publicly corrected. But as to the length of the quotation, it is with my own judgment to determine, and not for you to prescribe the quantity of matter I am to transcribe. The charge of taking things at 'second hand' comes with a very bad grace, from one, that is in the constant practice of the same thing.

I see that you have denounced, as an erroneous bigot, Dr. Clarke, who was one of the most learned men of his age, merely, because he has presented the truth in such a strong and clear point of view, as to cut up the *heresy* of Universalism, both root and branch. What will the serious and considerate think of this?

Aion, you admit is derived from *aei*, and *on*. 'On,' you remark 'signifies *being*, but does not fix its duration.' But, why did you not tell us that *on* was twice employed to express the *being* or *existence* of Christ? Rev. i. 4, 8, and twice to denote the *being* of the ever blessed God. Rev. iv. 8; xi. 17. This use of the word to say the least, is no proof that it has a limited signification. You say that *on* is derived from *eimi*, to be. This is admitted. Let us now see how *eimi* is generally applied in the New Testament, and the object of its common application, and it will probably cast some more light on this point. We read, 'And Jesus said unto them, *I am (eimi)* the bread of life.' John vi. 35. '*I am (eimi)* the light of the world.' John viii. 12. 'Before Abraham was *I am (eimi).*' John viii. 58. '*I am (eimi)* the door.' John x. 9. '*I am (eimi)* the good shepherd.' John x. 11. 'Where *I am (eimi)* there shall also my servant be.' John xii. 26. '*I am (eimi)* Alpha and Omega' Rev. i. 8. '*I am (eimi)* alive forevermore.' Rev. i. 18. I ask, is this use of the word any proof that it has a limited signification.

'*Aei*,' you say 'is from *a*, intensitive, and *eo*, to be, which I readily admit. But I absolutely deny that *aei* has a limited signification in all the five places you have cited from Rose's Parkhurst. I deny that it has a limited meaning in Acts vii. 51, where it is said, 'Ye do always (*aei*) resist the Holy Ghost.' They never did any thing else but resist. There is not the least shadow of proof that they ever at any time, yielded in the least degree to the influence of the Holy Spirit. 'Yet always (*aei*) rejoicing.'

2 Cor. vi. 10, must necessarily be understood in an endless sense. What! the joy of the saints not endless!! Away with such absurdity and falsehood. What are the causes of the saints' joy? Are they not the atonement of Christ, the promises of God, their regeneration by the Divine Spirit, and the fact that, their names are written in heaven. When these causes shall be removed, or be annihilated by a superior power, the joy of the saints which is the effect, shall cease, and not till then. I say without hesitation that *aei* has properly an *endless* or *unlimited* signification, and in this, which is its proper sense, it is used in the two places just quoted. It has a limited, or "restricted sense" as Parkhurst remarks in Mark xv. 8; 2 Cor. iv. 11; 2 Pet. i. 12, which the reader may examine at his leisure. Hence, *aion*, coming from *aei*, *always*, and *on*, *being*, must in its grammatical meaning, signify *endless duration*; therefore, I perfectly agree with Dr. Clarke, when he says "there is no word which more forcibly points out the grand characteristics of eternity."

Your play upon the phrases, "since the world began," "from the beginning of the world," "whilst the world standeth," &c. and your question if the word in the singular means endless, how could it be used in the plural? and how the inspired writers could say, *forever and ever*? &c. I consider to be mere quibbles, unworthy of a profound scholar, miserable subterfuges, to which you in common with other Universalists, resort as the last place of retreat, in a desperate case; like a drowning man, grasping at the bubbles on the water. Did I take it upon me to

vindicate the propriety of the English phrases above mentioned? No. But I said the Greek word in those places must be taken in an endless or unlimited signification. Parkhurst says *aion* "both in the *singular* and the *plural* signifies *eternity*, whether *past* or *to come*." Such questions as you have asked on this subject, should not have come from a sensible man, who professes to know and to teach truth.

You should have known that the phrase, "*day and night*," coupled with '*forever and ever*,' was a metaphorical expression to signify the *perpetuity* of the misery of the damned. If you look at Rev. iv. 8, you will find the same phrase connected with the celestial exercises of the glorious throng, before the throne of God.—And if you will turn to Rev. vii. 15, you will find that, the redeemed, who have come up out of great tribulation, and washed their robes in the blood of the lamb, are now before the throne of God, and there serve him "*day and night*." Now, there is as much reason to believe that the glory of heaven is on this earth, as there is to believe the torment of the damned is upon it. If you read the discourse of Josephus concerning Hades, you will find that he uses the phrase "*day and night*," in relation to eternity. So that your objection to the phrase *day and night* is nothing but a mere quibble, which can have no weight.

You were a little too hasty in denouncing, as false, my statement, concerning the preposition *eis*. I hope it was through inadvertency, rather than from mature consideration of the subject. This part of the subject requires a full investigation, and must not be covered up. My

sentiments regarding it, are not in the least degree changed. The substance of my former statement, as you may see, by a reference to my *second* letter, is nearly as follows:—The word *aion* occurs 104 times, in the New Testament. It is 33 times employed to signify a *temporary* duration. And it is 71 times used to denote *endless* duration; in 6 of which cases it expresses the misery of the damned. The word is governed by the preposition *eis* 61 times, in which construction it invariably, necessarily, and absolutely, means *endless* duration; the six cases of future punishment are placed in this awful predicament! For the truth of this whole statement, I appeal to any scholar whose mind is not warped or blinded by the false creed of Universalists. Let it be recollected I stated that the word, in 71 places means *endless* duration. In 61 of these places it is governed by *eis*, consequently the word in 10 places has an endless signification where it is not governed by this preposition. They are as follows:—Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30; John ix. 32; Acts xv. 18; Eph. iii. 9, 11, 21; Col. i. 26; 1 Tim. i. 17; 2 Pet. iii. 18. I have given these references to enable the reader to examine these places and judge for himself; as there has been some slight disagreement among the learned, whether they should be understood in a *limited*, or an *unlimited* sense. I believe they require to be understood, in an *unlimited* sense; therefore, I have added them to the places about which the learned are agreed, making in all 71 places where the noun *aion* means endless duration. If this is denied I wish to see proofs, to convince the judgment, and not naked, dogmatical assertions,

which must go for nothing with every enquiring mind.

I cannot admit that *eis ton aiona*, forever in John viii. 35, has a limited signification. To say that a servant i. e. a *sinner* ver. 34, shall not abide in the house forever, or to endless duration, is very correct and proper. To say that a child or son of God, as the sense of our Lord requires it to be understood, ver. 34, shall abide in the house forever, or to eternity, is absolutely correct and true. If you say that the son shall not continue in the house or church of God to eternity, but be cast out it is a giving up of the doctrine of Universalism at once: therefore, I hope it will not be said in future, that *aion* in this text has not an endless signification.

Regarding *eti* being connected with *aion*, in Exod. xv. 18; and in Dan. xii. 3, and *epekeina* in the same construction in Mich. iv. 5, I would observe that, *first*. These are not the only cases in which the Septuagint made bad Greek for the purpose of making their version appear exactly literal. *Second*. It was not for the purpose of defining the exact signification of *aion* that such particles are a few times added to it. *Third*. The classical Greek writers and the inspired writers of the New Testament, never felt the need of such additional particles when they wanted to express eternity. *Fourth*. It was to give what appeared a literal rendering of the Hebrew phrase, literally in England, for ever and ever, that they added *eti* and *epekeina*. Both signifying *ever*, or *eternity*, by themselves when applied to things capable of eternal dura-

tion. The two words were joined for the same reason that we join *ever* to *forever*; not because each singly does not fully express the thing intended, but because the union of both gives a stronger impression of it.

Suppose I had a dispute with some man concerning the english adjective *highest*, and that I denied it to be of the superlative degree. And to vindicate my position quote the phrase, "O thou Most Highest," from Ps. ix. 2, in the Episcopal Protestant Prayer Book. Such precisely, is your conduct in quoting the bad Greek of the Septuagint. A scholar should be ashamed of such conduct.

No real good can be derived from quotations taken from the uninspired, and often erroneous tranlation of the *seventy*; the rubbish of the fathers; or, the heterogeneous works of other enthusiasts and fanatics that may have used the word *aion* and *aionios*. We have the New Testament written in the Greek language by inspired men; and to it alone we must appeal; and by it the point must be settled.

I will lay down a few rules whereby the meaning of the words *ever* and *everlasting* may be known. These rules will apply to *aion* and *aionios*, in both the Old and New Testament.

Rule. 1. Where the word *ever* or *everlasting* is applied to an object or thing, which, in itself is not *endless*, as mountains, or hills; it is then to be understood in a *figurative* sense descriptive of a period equivalent with the duration of the object. But the word *exerlasting* is applied to the misery of punishment of the wicked, the wicked are immortal in their con-

stitution; therefore, the word here has an endless signification.

Rule. 2. When the word *ever*, or *everlasting* is applied to an object or thing, as the servitude of a slave; which is, in other parts of scripture, declared to have an end, the word must be taken in a *metaphorical* or *limited* sense; but no such declaration is made in scripture, concerning the punishment of the wicked; therefore, the word must be taken in an endless sense.

Rule. 3. The word *ever* or *everlasting* when applied to objects and things, always conveys an idea parallel with the duration of the object and thing which it is applied, unless they may be otherwise expressed in the text. It is applied to future punishment without any restriction whatever; therefore, it must be taken in its unlimited signification.

I shall close these observations by stating, that I call on you before the public, to show, by proper arguments that *aion* in the New Testament, when governed by the preposition *eis*, does not signify *endless* duration, or else give up the doctrine of Universalism, at once, as indefensible.

JOSEPH M'KEE.

LETTER NO. V.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 29, 1834.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

DEAR SIR:—I agree with you in saying, that the only question, which claims our attention in this controversy, is, whether punishment is temporary or endless; but I must consider, the charge with which your letter commences as unjust, and your questions as uncandid in the

extreme. Did you not commence the discussion, by saying, our difference of faith proves that our whole system is wrong? And in my reply, did I not show that there were only shades of difference among us, while among our opposers, there are those of the greatest magnitude; and that if your argument was sound, it overthrew all religion? In doing this, I alluded to the doctrine of *reprobation*, *infinite sin*, *infinite damnation*, and the case of the *heathen*. But how do you meet this reply? Why by a most singular process—not by an argument either from reason, nature or scripture, but by the cry of wandering from the subject.—An easy method this; if it should only prove satisfactory. The candid reader is not to be duped in this way, and though he may pity your dilemma, he will still call for *proof*. In passing, I will ask, if heathens and infants are not concerned in the question at issue, who are?

I expected, that my exposure of your partial quotations from Lexicographers would produce great uneasiness and piteous attempts at justification. But really, I did not expect you would say in plain terms, it is right to quote all or a part of an author's definition, as might suit your purpose. But why not quote the whole?—By your rule, I could prove, that according to Lexicographers *aion* never means endless; for all say it signifies age. I unhesitatingly declare, therefore, that you perverted the views of your authorities. I objected to your second hand quotations from Aristotle and Philo, because according to it, they differ from all other Lexicographers and from the testimony of Goodwin respecting them.—This you meet by

accusing me of being alike guilty, a singular method of justifying a wrong. Please name an instance where I have done this.

Finding nothing objectionable in the spirit of my letter, you have recourse to invention, and falsely accuse me with calling Clarke a 'bigot!' Now why is this? Do you imagine that all you may say will be implicitly received; and that such unfairness will aid your cause? You are welcome to all the benefit of such means.

Thus much for your irrelevant and uncandid introduction to letter five.

Your attempt to prove, that according to its etymology, *aion* signifies endless, in an entire failure, as a few remarks will show. Let us consider first what you say of *on*. You bring two cases, where it expresses the existence of God, and two the existence of Christ. But do these *prove* that it expressed endless duration? Jones says, *on* signifies a real existence, in opposition, to what exists only in appearance or profession. Thus the blind man said, *being (on)* blind, I now see John ix: 25, So in John viii: 47. He that *is (on)* of God, heareth God's words. So also John xviii. 37. Every one that *is (on)* of the truth, heareth my words. These cases show, that *on* signifies what actually is, and not what appears to be: when the Revelator, therefore, applied the word to God and Christ, his design was to express in the strongest manner their real existence. *On* therefore expresses reality, but not eternity. Of this there is no doubt.

2 *Eimi*. Your remarks on this, as on *on*, are a literary curiosity. Contrary to the definition of Parkhurst, who in the nine senses in

which it occurs, does not say, that even once it signifies endless, you alude to eight cases where it is applied to Christ, and vainly imagine that these prove it endless. But why did you not refer to the fact, that it signifies a limited existence? See for instance Matt. xviii. 20. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there *am* (*eimi*) I in the midst of them;" John vii. 33. Yet a little while *am* (*eimi*) I with you; 1 Cor. ix. 1. *Am* (*eimi*) I not an apostle? *Am* (*eimi*) I not free? 1 Cor. xv. 9. For I *am* (*eimi*) the least of the apostles; Phil. iv. 11. I have learned in whatsoever state I *am* (*eimi*) therewith to be content. Now from these cases, it is certain that *eimi* expresses nothing with regard to duration. Jones says it means *reality*, something like *on*. We might as well say, the Greek word for *has* or *is* means endless, because applied to God, as *eimi*.

2. *Aei*. You deny two out of five of the texts produced to prove this limited.

But do you pretend to affirm that Paul, Acts vii. 25, taught that the Jews never would yield to the Holy Ghost? You know that he referred to their *continual* opposition to God, and that he said nothing of what would be. Had he declared they would always resist, the case would be different. Your position then, contradicts the apostle. The same is true of 2 Cor. vi. 10, 'as sorrowful yet *always* rejoicing.' Because I said always did not mean endless, you pretend to great astonishment; and cry 'away with such *absurdity* and *falsehood*!' Flourishes and notes of surprise, will never supply the place of argument. That Paul had no reference to the future

joy of saints is evident from his saying, 'as sorrowful yet always rejoicing. Will saints have sorrow in heaven? See the whole verse, which represents the Christians as *poor* and having *nothing*. But is such language applicable to glory.

Thus have we proved that *on*, *eimi* and *aie* have no such meaning as endless, and as *aion* is formed from them, its grammatical sense must be a *continued existence*. Of nothing am I more fully convinced. I did suppose that something more plausible might be said in favor of the popular opinion; but I am frank to say, I can see nothing in your present letter which deserves the name of criticism or argument; and I would not said what I have, had I not desired to go more fully into the derivation of *aion*.

My questions respecting the beginning and end of *aion*, its being used in the plural and in a reduplicate form, are met with your stereotyped and all conquering argument—*quibbles, unworthy a profound scholar, miserable subtrefuges, bubbles* at which a drowning man grasps, and what every *man* of *sense* would despise!

I pity the man who has no better means of defence than such wretched slang. But I will not render railing for railing.

Your hint that the translation of *ton aionon eis tous aionas* is wrong, is entirely foreign from the question. I asked not concerning this but concerning the beginning and end of *aion*; how it could be used in the plural; and why the inspired writers should say, *aionos ton aionon*, if *aion* means endless; and had you been able to answer these, you would not have resorted to

abuse and denunciation.

You say, as the phrase, *day an night* is connected with the celestial exercises of the heavenly throng, it must be understood as a metaphorical expression to signify perpetuity. But first prove, that the texts to which you allude, relate to the final state of saints

That they refer to this world, there is no doubt. The figures, the representations, the allusions to burning lamps, thunder and lightning, seas of glass, land and water, all show this. I might quote Clarke here; for his sword has two edges, and it has demolished some of the strong holds of endless wo. But why should I offer proof against your assumptions?

You accuse me of inadvertency of something worse in my reply to your proposition respecting *eis*; but I now say, even in its modified form, it is groundless. 1. It is not "admitted on all hands that *aion* in 65 cases means endless." This *you now* admit; for you say 10 of these cases are thought by some to be limited. 2. *Aion* governed by *eis* is limited in the following texts, where you consider it endless: Matt. xxi. 19; Mark xi. 14; Luke i. 55; John iv. 14; vi. 51, 58; ix. 32; x. 28; xiii. 8; xiv. 16; 1. Cor. viii. 13; Hab. v. 6; vi. 5, 20, vii. 17, 21. To these I might add many more; but they are sufficient. 3. If in 10 cases *aion* is endless when not governed by *eis*, this preposition can be no rule by which to determine its meaning.-- 4. *Aion* in one of your 33 cases of limited duration, signifies the eternal world. See Luke xx. 35.

One remark here respecting *dogmatical assertions*. You discover a peculiar love for denun-

ciation, and for certain stereotyped charges, such as *quibbles*, *dogmatism*, &c. Now what did you more than to *assert*, that *aion* in the 55 instances governed by *eis* means endless? But though you simply asserted this. I pointed out 8 cases where *eis* did not govern it, which you said were endless, showed that in the Greek of the lxx. it was often limited when governed by *eis*, and that such was the case in the New Testament. This you call *dogmatism*!

Your remarks on John viii. 35, I consider unfounded, because Christ alluded to a custom among the Hebrews, recorded in Exod. xxi respecting slavery. The servant or slave served only six years, and hence the expression, he abideth not forever. But the son remained during life. That I am right is certain from Exod. xxi. 6, where we learn, that after a slave had refused freedom, he was to serve forever (*eis ton aiona*) or during life. Spiritualise this as you please, such were the facts respecting slaves and sons, and such is the language used respecting the time of their remaining in the house.—That Jesus used the slave and son as figures I admit, but this alters not the use of *aion*. Here then is another argument against your view of *eis*, and another proof that *aion* is limited.

Your positions respecting *eti* and *epekeina*, are tautological and unfounded. The 1st and 4th are the same. It matters not whether the lxx made good Greek or not. Their use of these words, (and they give the true sense of the Hebrew) shows, that *aion* was not understood by them to mean endless. You say, *eti* and *epekeina* were not used to define the exact signification of *aion*. True, but their use,

shows that it was limited, otherwise no word expressing addition, would have been added.—The fact that these particles do not occur in the New Testament can prove nothing with respect to their use by the lxx.

Your vindication of the double form of *aion* is far-fetched and falacious. The Hebrew is *olam va ad*. The Septuagint is *ton aiona, kai ep' aiona, kai eti*: in other places it is *eis ton aiona, kai eis ton aiona. tou aionos*. In the New Testament, it is *eis tous aionas ton aionon*. Now all these expressions are the same in meaning. They are grammatical, because *olam* and *aion*, depend on their use for their signification; but did they strictly mean endless, no rule of language could justify their use in this manner. If *olam* means a long time, *olam va ad* would be a still longer time; but if *olam* means eternity then *olam va ad* means *eternity and beyond it*. So with the Greek, both of the lxx and the New Testament. In the light of these facts, what shall we think of your classical allusion to *Most Highest*? You object to my allusion to the Septuagint, then you must object to the Hebrew and to the Greek of the New Testament, for the same form of expression occurs in both.

You differ widely from Dr. Clarke, respecting the Septuagint. While you are saying it is bad Greek and can be of no service, he declares, that it is of the greatest service. Besides, why not refer to this, as well as to the Targums?

With regard to the phrase of *forever* and *ever*, they have grown out of the Hebrew and Greek, and are used in the same sense. Thus we say *forever*, and mean the period of *life, forever and*

mean *eternity*, *forever* and *ever*, and mean the same. The words as their originals in Hebrew and Greek, depend on their use for the sense. The translators in numerous instances recognize this rule.

Before considering your three rules, it may be well to observe the change you have experienced since writing letter No. 2. Then the question must turn on the grammatical meaning of *aion*; now other rules must be adopted. But had you proved that *aion* of itself means endless, it would be no argument against us, because as it is variously used, we must learn its sense from its connexion. This all critics allow.

Rule 1 is admitted, but the inference is rejected, it having not the most distant connexion with the rule. The immortality of the mind is no proof of the immortality of sin. Sin is corruption; it is of earthly origin; it is not of God and must come to nought. The misery of the mind depends not on its immortality, but on its impurity. Hence before Rule I would justify you in saying that *aionios*, in connexion with misery means endless, you must prove that sin, the cause of misery is endless in its nature.—The nature of the mind proves nothing with respect to the nature or duration of sin.

Rule 2 is admitted, but the assumption denied. When you say, the Bible nowhere teaches that punishment will end, you assume the whole ground in debate. Suppose I should say, the Bible declares that the misery of the wicked will end; therefore, *aionios* when connected with misery, must be limited—would you not call me an oracle; and would not the wise men

of the land do me reverence? What honors then are due to thee?

Rue 3 is admitted, but the groundless assertion is rejected with contempt. That a man professing to argue a religious question, and from the scriptures too, should deal thus in assertions, is almost incredible. Why is this, Sir? Have you exhausted your stock of arguments? The whole of letter five consists of charges, assumptions and assertions.

Your public call respecting *eis* is quite pompous. With one breath, you lay down three rules to decide the question at issue, and with the next you declare that a *preposition* settles the matter *eis ton aion*. But before you made this call, it would have been well to prove, that *aion* means endless, in the fifty-five cases where it is governed by *eis*; and as that matter rests on assumption, it must receive attention, or your public call will be answered by one loud and long *from* the public.

I have paid no attention to your remark, that future punishment is vindictive, thinking it best to leave this, till furnished with your reasons for converting God into a being of *rage* and *revenge* and for arming him with infinite vengeance.

One word on your remark that "no good can arise from allusions to the heterogenous words of enthusiasts and fanatics, who have used *aion* and *aionios*," and I will close. This was doubtless made with reference to my closing remarks in letter No. 3, where I alluded to the manner in which these words were used by the Greek fathers: Knowing that this would be an unanswerable argument against you; the fathers are

denounced as enthusiasts and fanatics. This is in keeping with letter No. 1, where you denounce these fathers as artful and cunning, and accuse them of the mean artifice of torturing and perverting the Bible to deceive the illiterate. Not content with heaping contempt on some of the most learned and pious christian fathers, you even denounce the Septuagint. But this you are compelled to do, in order to sustain your unfounded notions. Why may not as much aid be derived from the Greek fathers, as from the Targums?

There is one fact worthy of notice respecting these fathers. Several of those who wrote in the Greek language during the second, third and fourth centuries, maintained the doctrine of Universal Salvation; yet they freely and habitually applied the terms in question to the subject of punishment, without any explanation, such as our modern prepossessions would have made necessary in order to prevent mistake. This shows that the ancient Greek fathers never suspected that those terms would, of themselves, convey the notion of endless duration, when applied to punishment. And this conclusion is confirmed by another fact, viz. that those Greek fathers who on the contrary did not believe in Universal Salvation, and who began at length zealously to oppose that doctrine, never quoted the terms now in question, against their opponents, but resorted to other arguments. I speak of the most ancient Greek christians; those who lived before the fifth century.

I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER NO. VI.

BALTIMORE, NOV, 25, 1834.

To Rev. Otis A Skinner:

Dear Sir.—I was more surprised on reading your *third* letter, than I was by all your former communications. It appears to me that you wish to confine almost every subject in the scriptures, to the state of mortality, in the present world. One would think, by your manner of treating the subject, that you intended to set every thing at loose ends, and consider nothing as absolutely certain. It would appear that you endeavoured, not only, to destroy the evidence of *endless misery*, but the evidence of *endless happiness*; and, even render doubtful, the immortality of the soul. I never expected to find a Universalist, that would so much as insinuate the smallest doubt, concerning the unlimited duration of the spiritual life of the saints.—But such is the state of affairs. Now, it appears to me that, the endless happiness of the saints, must be proved by the adjective *aionios*, or not at all, for, I know of no other word by which it can be done, if this one be insufficient to do it. Therefore, the *misery* of the wicked and the *happiness* of the saints must stand, or fall together; if *aionios* cannot prove the endless duration of misery, it cannot prove the endless duration of happiness; and if it can prove the interminable duration of happiness; it has undoubtedly the same force in its application to misery; it is the adjective which is commonly used in the scriptures to express both.

Regarding the word (*zoe*) *life*, it may be remarked, that there are several sorts of life.—

As,—1 *Vegetable life*. This is found in all vegetables, plants, flowers and trees. 2. *Animal life*. This abounds in the fishes of the sea, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and in the mortal body of man. 3. *Rational life*. This faculty exists in man; that is, in the unregenerated of mankind, and this gives man the preeminence over all other things, in this lower creation. 4. *Spiritual life*. This principle is communicated to the heart of the believer by the Spirit of God, 2 Cor. iii. 6, and is to be found in none but those who believe in Christ, with a heart unto righteousness. It is called the life of God, Eph. iv. 18, because it is a principle which came from God, producing holiness of heart and uprightness of deportment, in those who possess it, and shall ultimately return to God. This is sometimes called “a treasure in an earthen vessel.” 2. Cor. iv. 7. It is nothing short of the Redeemer himself, dwelling in the human heart by faith. This is manifest, from the phraseology of scripture, where it is said, “Christ in you the hope of glory,” Col. i. 24, and where he is called “our life,” &c. Col. iii. 4. Those metaphors, generally, which exhibit the union of Christ with his people, convey, very clearly, the idea of life. If you give him the appellation of *Prince*, Acts iii. 15, you must allow, he is the Prince of *life*. If *Bread*, John vi. 48, he is the bread of *life*. If *Water*, Rev. xxii. 17, he is the water of *life*. If a *Stone*, 1 Pet. ii. 4, he is a *living stone*. If you liken him to a *Tree*, Rev. ii. 7, he is the tree of *life*. The life of the redeemed seems to be both connected with the life of Christ, and to be depending on it, and of equal

duration with it. This is evident from the words of our blessed Saviour himself, "because I live ye shall live also." John xiv, 19. Furthermore, the apostle John declares that, "he who hath the Son hath life, and he who hath not the Son hath not life." 1 John v. 12. Now this spiritual life, in the redeemed, is, in *forty-four* places called (*zoen aionion*) *eternal life*. It is strange to me, that any Universalist would cast the slightest shade over the doctrine of endless happiness. A man may have a treasure in his possession, and afterwards lose it; but, this is no argument to prove, that, the treasure is not still of the same value and excellence. A diamond is a diamond as well when it is in the bottom of the sea, as when it is in a lady's breast.—Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. This spiritual life was intended to exist to interminable ages, by Him, who is able to sustain it against all opposition. Either, the saints have endless life, or they have not. Take which side of the question you please. If you say they have not, this controversy is at an end; for then they must be annihilated, or go into an endless hell. If you say they have endless life, you cannot deny but the phrase *zoen aionion* means eternal life, or endless life, as you will have some considerable difficulty in proving their happiness to be endless by any other word. I leave it with the reader to judge whether the attempt to deny that *endless* life was intended in those *forty-four* cases, was a mere quibble, in order to get quit of the word when employed to express the duration of future misery.

That the everlasting life, and everlasting

shame and contempt mentioned in Dan. xii. 2. were to take place upon the Jews, in this life, is extremely doubtful, to say the least. It appears that the transactions mentioned in the text, shall not take place till the day of judgment. It is said many (all) of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to *everlasting life* and some to shame and *everlasting contempt*. (See parellel passage in John v. 28, 29). A man that can torture this text, so as to explain it of a temporal transaction, previous to the day of judgment, may use every text in the Bible like a nose of wax that will bend every way. It is worthy of remark, that the duration, both of happiness of the righteous, and the contempt of the wicked, is expressed by the word *olam* in the Hebrew, *aionion* in the Greek, and *everlasting* in the English. This text is point blank against the doctrine of Universalism.

This text in Acts xiii. 48, has nothing to do with foreordination of predestination to eternal life. As many as were (*tetagmenoi*) disposed, adapted, or prepared for eternal life, believed. There is not one word concerning predestination in the text, but merely a present disposition to embrace eternal life, such as were so disposed, believed the report of the gospel.

As to your question, "if everlasting life means endless happiness, why did Jesus, after saying, he gave his sheep eternal life, add, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand," it may be said, he used this form of speech, not because each particular did not mean endless life, but to make a deeper im-

pression on the mind of his audience. And for the same reason, we have often, in scripture, two or more words or phrases of the same signification, coupled together; as, "prayer and supplication," &c. &c.

In relation to the use of the word *aionios*, in Rom. xvi. 25, 2 Tim. i. 8; Tit. i. 2; it may be remarked that there is no inconsistency in understanding the word in the endless sense. The phrase, *mustericu kroncis aioniois sesigemenou*, may, with as much truth and propriety be rendered, "mystery kept secret during the eternal or unlimited past ages, or from eternity," as "mystery kept secret since the world began." The phrase "before the world began," or "before eternity." I think, is no more absurd than the English phrase, 'from eternity' or 'to eternity.' Both seem to refer to some point when eternity began, or when it will end. If a point of time be admitted to justify the phrase 'from eternity,' certainly it is not absurd to say before eternity, as all points of time presuppose a previous time. The fact is, neither the phrase, 'from eternity' nor the phrase 'before eternity,' will bear a critical investigation, though we are sometimes obliged to use them, owing to the poverty of language.

The phrase 'everlasting gospel,' not only means, that it shall be preached to the end of the world, and that none other shall succeed it; but it signifies that its effects shall be endless, in all them that hear it. Those who believe and obey shall have endless happiness, and those who reject it shall have endless misery. This far, I think, is intended by the phrase, "everlasting gospel."

You ask me, "how can Christ's kingdom be endless when he says, he shall deliver it up to his Father," (*he said no such thing*) See 1 Cor. xv. 24. This is a strange question! If you say his kingdom is not endless, the discussion is at an end, for his kingdom is composed of men and they must either be annihilated or cast into endless perdition, if they do not continue to compose that kingdom. I hold that Christ's kingdom is endless, because it is said, "of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end." Isa. ix. 17. Again, "his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. vii. 12. Again, "he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke i. 33. The transfer of an object from one agent to another, certainly does not imply the destruction of the object thus transferred. Therefore, Christ's kingdom may be endless, in its nature and constitution, though in some sense delivered up to the Father. This is poor shuffling to do away the force of the adjective *aionios*.—Nothing but a bad cause could set a man at war with his own principles.

In regard to the meaning of the phrase, "enter into life maimed," Matt. xviii. 8, I would observe, that the word "maimed," is employed to comport with the metaphorical language of the preceding part of the verse, where the "hand" and "foot" are intended to designate our beloved sins, which we must lay aside, or cut off; before we can possess eternal life.

It does not appear to me that the paragraph in Matt. xxv. from verse 31 to the end of the

chapter, can be properly understood, in any other way but as descriptive of the day of judgment. A parable is a sort of fable or allegorical discourse, founded on something in nature or common life, from which moral instruction is drawn. Now, the passage in question is not founded on any past transaction in life; but, must throughout be considered as literally descriptive, with the exception of one trope or metaphor i. e. the *sheep* and the *goats*. Suppose you should substitute the word *saints* and *sinner*s, which you, no doubt, allow to be what is intended, and then see if any passage could be more literally descriptive. At all events, whatever length the duration of the misery of the wicked may be, the happiness of the righteous is just the same, as the same word is employed to express the duration of both.

I cannot consider the observations on Mark iii. 29; Heb. vi. 2; and Jude 7 in any other point of view, than as mere evasions, quibbles, void of close and accurate criticism. Take the following as a specimen. "*Aionion* remember, is formed from *aion*; and as *aion* is used to signify an age, an *aionion* *damnation* must be the damnation of an age." This is a sort of logic that will suit any purpose. Let me try it on another subject, till we see how it will work. Godlike remember, is formed from God; and as God is used to signify an idol, a godlike man must be a man like an idol. Who would not be ashamed of such absurdities as these? The discerning reader, will observe that, in all your remarks concerning *aion* and *aionios*, you never told us how often, either the one or the other was to be taken in a limited or unlimited signification; nor point-

ed out the places where they were so to be understood, though you said both words were to be taken, sometimes in the one way, and sometimes in the other. If this does not manifest a fear, lest truth should come out, I know not what does.

I shall close these remarks, for the present, concerning the adjective *aionios*, with a quotation from Dr. Clarke, taken from his notes on Matt. xxv. 46. "But some are of opinion that this punishment shall have *an end*. This is as likely as that the glory of the righteous shall have *an end*: for the same word is used to express the *duration* of the punishment, *kolasin aionion*, as is used to express the duration of the state of glory: *zoen aionion*. I have seen the best things that have been written in favour of the final redemption of damned spirits; but I never saw an answer to the argument against the doctrine drawn from this verse, but what sound learning and criticism should be ashamed to acknowledge."

At the close of your letter you say, "when the inspired writers would express the endless felicity of heaven, they use such words as *endless*, incorruptible, immortal, &c. words strictly unequivocal in their meaning. And in your sermon on Matt. xxv. 31—46, (page 20) you say, "We do not rely on *aion* to express the duration of future blessedness; but we rely on words, which are of the most expressive character, such as immortal, incorruptible, and endless—words that are never applied to sin or any of its consequences." Where are those words employed by the inspired writers to express the du-

ration of the happiness of all men? I deny that such language is ever used in scripture in relation to all men; unless you can show that it is employed to express the final salvation of the wicked, your labor goes for nothing, as no one denies the endless happiness of the righteous. I doubt very much that the word *endless* is ever used in scripture to express the duration of the happiness of the saints, or whether the words immortal and incorruptible are ever used to express either happiness or misery but merely perpetual existence. I now call upon you to prove what you have said, in relation to these words; that is, to show where they are employed to express the duration of the happiness of the redeemed, and also to produce the strongest adjective you can find in the New Testament to prove the *endless* happiness of the saints, and I will promise to show as strong language from the same authority to prove the endless punishment of the wicked.

Respecting the first question proposed in your *first* letter, concerning the revelation of Christ, 2 Thess. i. 7, if his coming was not to destroy Jerusalem, I would remark that there are, at least, *five* distinct and separate comings of Christ, noticed in the scriptures. The blending together of these various manifestations or comings of Christ, has caused great confusion in the study of the New Testament. In general any remarkable manifestation of the power of Christ, in the dispensations of his providence, either for the overthrow of his enemies or the establishment of his kingdom is called his coming. I have classed his various comings, mentioned in scripture, as follows:

1. His coming literally into the world.—Mal. iii. 1. 2. His coming by his providence to destroy Jerusalem and establish his kingdom, which took place 40 years after his ascension to heaven. Dan. vii. 13 14; Mat. xxiv. 27—39. His coming by his providence to destroy the “man of sin” and establish more firmly his kingdom. 2 Thes. i., 8. The “man of sin” and “son of perdition,” is said by Bishop Newton, to be the pope, or rather the power held by a succession of popes. According to this interpretation which is as likely as any, to be the true one, this manifestation of Christ has not taken place; but will according to some, in the year 1866. Consider this as an answer to the first and fourth question. 4. His coming by his providence to deliver his people from their miseries by death. Matt. xxv. 13; Luke xii. 40, 43; 1 Cor. i. 8. 5. His coming at the day of judgment, literally to judge the world. Matt. xxv. 31; 1 Thes. iv. 15; 2 Tim. iv. 1. Rev. i. 7. As to your second question, it is certain, the apostle was speaking of the deliverance of the saints and the destruction of their persecutors; but this is no proof that the destruction of Jerusalem was intended, but rather the final overthrow of the ungodly at the day of judgment; as this world is not the place of rewards or punishments, but the place of the probation of all. As to how I will reconcile the uncertainty of the day, spoken of by Paul, with the day of judgment, I see no difficulty at all. The time of the day of judgment was unknown, and still is unknown, but the fact that there is such a day, is revealed. And though the time is uncertain,

the apostles always exhorted the people to be constantly ready for that day.

Now as I have endeavoured to answer, at least, one half dozen questions, which by the way, had a very remote bearing on the subject in hand, I will take the liberty of asking you another half dozen, that have a direct reference to the subject of the present discussion, which I hope you will answer in your next communication. They are as follows:

1. What length of time shall the wicked continue in misery in a future state of existence? if this cannot be answered,

2. How can you prove that their misery is not endless?

3. What influence has the atonement of Christ on the condition of the damned, in a future state?

4. Is *ho diabolos*, the devil, a personal spirit, or nothing but the depravity of human nature?

5. Whether is the devil and his companions to be annihilated, or admitted into the heavenly blessedness, when all misery shall come to an end?

6. Is Jesus Christ, as to his Divine nature, truly and really God?

Yours in the bonds of Christianity,
JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER, No. VI.

BALTIMORE, Nov. 22, 1834.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir—I regret that so much of your letter is wasted in charging me with sentiments to which I have not alluded, and in denouncing as quibbles what you have not attempted to answer. Because I deny that *everlasting life*, (*zoea aionion*'s alway means endless happiness, I am accused of denying the immortality of the soul, and the eternity of bliss. But, I should much rather see you prove that the life of faith is endless, than deal out such groundless charges. Why did you pass unnoticed, the numerous quotations which I made, where believers are said to *have* eternal life? These are not even honored with the charge of *quibbles*. They stand therefore, in undisputed strength, against your views.

It is surprising, that you should again say, if we deny the eternity of misery, we must the eternity of happiness, because *aionios* is applied to both, when you have not replied to my arguments, showing that in every instance, where *aionios* is connected with misery, the scope of the subject, limits it to this world. Eternal life and punishment are only twice (how often in Methodist sermons?) set in contrast in the whole Bible. The first instance (Dan. xii: 2.) is applied by our Lord to the destruction of Jerusalem. Is not this a strong argument in proof that the last (Matt. xxv: 46.) refers to the same time? It does refer to a coming of Christ; it is a

part of our Lord's answer to his disciples' question when he should come; and in this answer, he several times declares, that his coming would be in that age. You admit that *olam* in Daniel is the same as *aionios* in Matt. (though you denied this in Letter, No. 1.) It is morally certain then, that both refer to the same event—the destruction of Jerusalem.

The criticism to which you cling, as the main pillar of endless wo, has nothing but its antiquity for a recommendation. This will appear by considering,

1. The use of *olam* in the Old Testament.—Like *aionios* of the New, it is the common word for eternity; and it is used to express the eternal existence of God, his attributes and his ways; and yet, it is applied to hills, mountains, covenants, and a very great variety of things, which have ceased to exist. It is used in one text (Habakkuk iii: 6.) in a limited and unlimited sense; and it signifies in one case (Jonah ii: 6.) three days and three nights. Now, according to your logic, if *olam* does not mean endless when applied to hills, &c. it does not when applied to God. That it is limited in these cases, we know. Your reasoning therefore, disproves the Divine existence.

2. The meaning of *aionios* must be determined by the noun to which it is applied, and the circumstances under which it is used. Thus, when we read of Onesimus being with Philemon *forever*, (*aionion*) of believers *having* eternal life, (*zoeon aionion*) and of the eternal (*aioniou*) God, we learn the meaning of *aionios* by the noun with which it is connected. Now, we can prove, from the nature of happiness,

and the circumstances under which *aionios* occurs, that it sometimes means endless, when applied to life. Therefore, unless you can show either from the nature of punishment, or the circumstances under which *aionios* is used, when applied to misery, that it signifies endless, your criticism is unfounded.

3. Your criticism was first advanced by Augustine, an African Bishop, A. D. 414. Previous to that time, though much had been written against Universalism, no argument had been drawn, either from *aion* or *aionios*; and the Universalists of that period, threatened sinners with *aionion* punishment, without offering any such explanation, as the education of this age, would require of me, were I thus to threaten sinners. This proves, that Christ and the Apostles, could not have used *aion* and *aionios* in their present popular sense.

There being but little in your letter, which requires an answer, and as I am accused of shrinking from an investigation of the phrase, *zoen aionion*, I will give the different senses in which it occurs.

1. It signifies the life of faith—a life which lasts during the existence of faith. See John iii: 16, 36; vi: 40, 47, 54. In these, and numerous other instances, believers are said to *have* everlasting life. That endless life is not meant, is evident for several reasons, 1. Because the believer of to-day, may be the infidel of to-morrow. 2. Eternal life is synonymous with *life, entering Christ's kingdom, having rest, peace, joy and love*. See John vi. 33, 53; 1. John v. 12; Heb. iv. 3; 1 John iii. 15; Rom. xiv. 17; xv. 13; John iii. 5. 3. In this world, we walk by faith, not

by sight. 4. Endless joy, will not be dependent on faith. In heaven, we shall see eye to eye and know as we are known. We shall have the bliss of actual possession and of perfect knowledge. The *aionion* life of faith, therefore, can never mean endless. How many, who once had *life, peace and joy*, are now dead in trespasses and sin! It will not answer to say, they had endless life, but have lost it through unbelief, as your illustration from the diamond supposes; for we walk by faith; faith is the evidence of things not seen. Instead of introducing us to its object, faith only enables us to enjoy it, by anticipation. Thus, in this world, where our journey lies through a vale of tears and we are overshadowed by clouds of affliction, we are cheered and guided on our way, by the beamings of faith. 'Tis this which illumines our path and enables us to hope for a better world to come. But however strong our faith may be, we possess not the endless life which it reveals. That which is strictly endless can have no contingencies. In this world, therefore, saints cannot have endless life; for theirs' is contingent. Even those, in whom Christ, the hope of glory dwelt, did not have endless life; for many renounced their Savior. They drank, it is true, from an unfailing fountain of life; but the contingencies of faith and love show, that they had not endless life. In saying this, I cast not a shade of doubt over the eternity of bliss; because, in the immortal state, there can be no contingencies. My sentiments therefore, are far from leading to annihilation, except it be the annihilation of the arguments against impartial grace.

2. *Zoen aionion* (eternal life) is used to express the reward of the primitive christians, after the destruction of Jerusalem. See Matt. xix. 29; xxv. 46; Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30; John xii. 25. This world (*aion*) means, according to critics, the Jewish age; the world (*aion*) to come the christian. Those who left house, land and connexions, under the Jewish age, for the Gospel, would receive as a reward for their sacrifices, sufferings and faithfulness, eternal life in the christian age. By giving up all, and living as though they would lose their lives, (Matt. xvi. 25) they would save them. Hence (John xii. 25) it is said, those who hated their lives should keep them unto *life eternal*, while those who loved their lives should lose them. This could not mean endless life, for it was given us a reward, (Matt. xxv. 34—37) whereas endless life is a free gift; neither could it be the life of faith, for this the disciples enjoyed, when the promise was made relative to the coming age. Besides, it was a life to which their bodies would be preserved. It was therefore, that season of rest, granted to the primitive christians, after their enemies were overwhelmed in judgment. See Matt. xxiv. 13; xvi. 24—28; Heb. x. 32—39, where similar promises are made. Let it be remembered here, that Daniel xii. 2, is applied by our Lord to this reward and punishment.

3. *Zoen aionion* signifies endless life. Thus the Saviour says: "Father the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee, as thou hast given him power over all flesh that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." John xvii. 1, 2. St Paul, contrasting the reign of sin with that of glory,

says: "As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. v. 21. St. John says: "This is the record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." 1 John v 11. From these quotations, we see, that *zoen aionion* often signifies the life, which exists in Christ, what was given in him, and what he will finally give all flesh. To give endless life to all, would be the highest glory of God, and cause grace to reign as universally, unto eternal life, as sin had reigned unto death. Those who deny this, make God a liar, for this is the record which God has given of his Son. If all had not endless life in him, disbelieving the record would not make God a liar for the record would be false. Hence St. John says, these things have I written, that ye may know ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. This life exists independently of faith, and is the end, the glory and vital element of the gospel. It was a *gift*, not an offer; a *free* gift, not granted as a reward. It is synonymous with the inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved for us in heaven. It must therefore be endless.

Let us consider also, that Christ was made a minister of infinite blessings and unsearchable riches. In him *all fulness* dwelt; he was the life of the world, the new and *living* way, the salvation of God to the *ends* of the *earth*. Add to all this, those words, strictly endless, which are used to express the result of his mission—words never applied to sin or misery, and the eternity of life is placed beyond dispute. Thus,

Christ is said to be made a high priest, after the power of an endless (*akatalutou*) life. He is the resurrection and the life, and as all died in Adam, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. In the resurrection state, we shall be incorruptible and immortal, for the *dead*, (1 Cor. xv. 52) not a part, but the *dead* shall be raised thus. All men then, will be raised incorruptible and immortal. Hence Christ says, in the resurrection state, they are equal unto the angels! How are angels? holy and happy. So then will mankind be. They will die no more, being the children of the resurrection. When the resurrection, therefore, takes place, all will be subjected to Christ, he will deliver up his kingdom to the Father, God will be all in all, death will be destroyed, this corruptible will put on incorruption and this mortal immortality. Then will be brought to pass that saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. To understand the full import of this saying, turn to Isai. xxv. where this is written. There God declares, that he has prepared a feast for all people, that he will destroy the covering cast over all, that he will swallow up death in victory, wipe away tears from all faces, and take away the rebuke of his people from all the earth.—At the resurrection then, ignorance, death, tears and rebuke will be unknown, and all will be brought to a participation of grace. Then too will be heard the song, O death where is thy sting? O grave (*hell*) where is thy victory?—Now as the sting of death is sin, we could not shout the victory over death, while suffering under its sting. Sin therefore, can have no existence in the resurrection state. What is here

proved of one man, is proved of the **WHOLE WORLD.**

Such, dear sir, is the proof that the life which Christ will give to the world is endless; and the man, I was about to say, who, in view of this could doubt the endless happiness of all, could doubt his own existence. We may say therefore, in the language of Clarke, "The salvation from sin, is as extensive and complete as the guilt and contamination of sin, death is conquered, hell disappointed, the devil confounded, and sin totally destroyed. Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth! Amen and Amen!"

I will now briefly allude to your remarks respecting my third letter. On Dan. xii. 2, you say, a man, who can so torture this text as to refer it to a temporal judgment, may use every text in the Bible, as a nose of wax. Powerful reasoning! The strong pillars of Universalism must now fall. The Saviour erred when he applied this language to the destruction of Jerusalem. Speaking of this, he says in the language of Daniel, "then," that is, when those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake—"then shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."

I cannot admit, that ordained to life, means disposed to life, because, ordained (*tetagmenoi*) is from a Hebrew word, which signifies to place, to set, to appoint. 2. According to the best authorities, this is the sense of *tasso* from which *tetagmenoi* is formed. Other texts speak of foreordination to life. See Eph. i. 4, 5, 11; ii. 10; Rom. viii. 29, 30.

On the remark offered respecting Christ's giv-

ing his sheep eternal life, I will only say, had the people understood this phrase as you do, no expression to render it impressive could have been wanting; for what could be stronger, than I will give them *endless life*?

Your remarks on Rom. xvi. 25; 2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2; are entirely unsatisfactory. By adopting my views of these texts, no difficulty occurs; but if you prefer to convert the language of inspiration into absurdity and contradiction, rather than admit that *aionios* is sometimes limited, I have nothing to say. Argument in such a case is useless. Every reader will see your error. The texts speak of a purpose formed before the *aionion* times; of a mystery kept hid since the beginning of the world; and of eternal life provided before the world began. Now if you say, *aionios* in these cases, means eternity, you must charge the inspired writers with speaking of *eternities*, of a time ^{or} before eternities, and of their *beginning*.

As the phrase *everlasting gospel* has but little bearing on the question at issue, I will only remark on what you have said, the effects of the gospel are no more endless than of the law, so that we might as well say, everlasting law, as everlasting gospel.

By the end of Christ's kingdom I meant his giving it up to the Father. Then cometh the *end* when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God. Which will you follow, Paul, or your own fancy? The texts which you have brought to prove that Christ's kingdom will not end, are evidently misapplied. One says, of the increase of his government there shall be no end. But how can it continue to increase when the world

has ceased to exist and Christ is no longer King? Another says, he shall reign over the house Jacob forever. But shall we explain this to contradict Paul, where he says, he shall reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet? This certainly implies that his reign would end. Your inference, that if Christ's kingdom ends Universalism cannot be true, is far fetched and absurd; for Paul says, Christ delivers up his kingdom to the Father, and God is all in all.

On Matt. xviii. 8, you speak with apparent hesitancy, but having explained this in my 3d letter, I will add nothing further.

On Matt. xxv: 46, you say, it *appears to me*, that this refers to a future judgment. Thus it is you treat the main text against Universalism—you rest your application of it entirely on popular prejudice. And this you back up, by continually repeating Clarke's assertion, that sound criticism and learning should be ashamed of what Universalists have said on the text. Please give *one* argument, that the text appeared to inspired men, as it appears to you.

My expositions of Mark iii. 29; Heb. vi. 2, Jude 7, are passed in silence. The reader will draw his own conclusions. It is true, you have denounced them as *evasions, quibbles, &c.* It is also true, that you have ridiculed what I said on Mark iii. 29. My inference respecting *aionion* was founded on the agreement between Mark and Matthew (xii. 16.) The former says, *hath not forgiveness unto the age, (aion) but is in danger of everlasting (aionion) damnation.* The latter says, *neither in this age, (aion) neither in the age (aion) to come.*

This argument proves positively, that *aion* is limited, for how could another *aion* come unless this ended? Now as *aionion* was formed from *aion*, was not my inference just? I will here add, what Mark expresses by, is in danger of *aionion* damnation, Matthew express by, hath not forgiveness in the age to come. Thus we see, according to Matthew and Mark, the adjective (*aionios*) signifies no more than the noun (*aion*.) My inference therefore, is indisputable. What a pity that Matthew and Mark had not lived in this age. Than they might have saved themselves the shame of making our Lord teach the absurd doctrine of an age-lasting judgment upon those who refused his instructions. And how strange that such a shameful absurdity should happen to be true. A sad judgment indeed befel the enemies of our Lord.

By the rule which you prove five comings of Christ, I can prove fifty. Texts which I have proved, relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, you apply to three different events, without a single proof for so doing! Now is this fair? And is this the way to settle the question at issue? If you have proof, why deal thus in assumptions? All the main texts which speak of a coming to punish men, I have proved, refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. Among these are Matt. xxv. 46, 2, Thess. 1, 9, and unless you answer my arguments on these, I shall consider them rescued from your hands.

Your reply to my 2d proposition on 2, Thess. 1, 9, does not meet the question. Those who troubled the christians were to be recompensed; and at the time of this, the christians were

to be redeemed from trouble. The time then, could not be at a future judgment. You say this judgment must be in the future world, because this is not a world of rewards and punishments. Then there is not a God who judgeth in the earth, and the righteous and wicked are not here recompensed. Peter says, "*The time is come*, that judgment must begin at the house of God, or with us, the christians."

Your reply to my 3d proposition is an entire failure. The question was, respecting the *uncertainty* of the day (that day shall not come except there come a falling away first,) and not respecting the uncertainty of their knowledge, when it would come.

The other two you have not attempted to answer.

Your six questions, I consider, entirely irrelevant; but to save words, I will answer briefly. To the 1st, I reply, I pretend not to be wise above what is written. To the 2d, by showing that there is no proof of endless misery. (By reviewing our discussion, you might have easily answered this. To the 3d, the same it has in this. To the 4th and 5th, I reject the common doctrine of a devil and of course his salvation. To 6th—I believe Christ is the Son of God.

I am &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. VII.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 30, 1834.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:—

DEAR SIR,—I shall in this letter, lay before you *twelve* objections to the doctrine of universal salvation, taken from the metaphor, and parables of the New Testament. And,

1. In Matth. III. 12. (see Luke III. 17.) we read that “he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. On this text I would remark that, 1. The *wheat* and the *chaff* are metaphors, intended to point out the condition of the righteous and the wicked, in this world. 2. The disposition which was made of them, that is, the gathering in of the wheat to the garner, and the burning up of the chaff, was designed to point out the disposition which shall be made of the righteous and the wicked, at the day of judgment; the former shall be admitted into the heavenly blessedness, while the latter shall be cast into eternal fire. Now, to say that the wicked will come to eternal life as well as the righteous, would not only quite destroy the most prominent feature in the metaphor, but directly contradict it.

2. We are informed Matth. III. 10. (Matth. III. 17—19; Luke III. 9.) that “the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is

hewn down and cast into the fire." On this passage I would observe, 1. The word *trees* is a trope or metaphor to signify men. 2. The axe is the justice of God. 3. The good fruit is the fruit of the spirit, Gal. v. 22, 23., love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith or fidelity, meekness and temperance. Those who do not bring forth these fruits shall be cut down by the judgments of God, and cast into everlasting fire. One of the most prominent features in this metaphor is, the utter impossibility of a burned tree, returning to its original state of verdure. This idea, when carried out, and applied to the state of the sinner, will present itself in direct opposition to his final restoration to endless happiness.

3. We read Matth. v. 13. (Luke xiv. 34, 35.) "ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men." Here it may be observed, 1. The word *salt* is a metaphor, designed to signify men. 2. The savour of the salt may signify the influence of true piety, and the grace of God, in the hearts and lives of men. 3. The use of salt, is to preserve the various articles of domestic life; so truly pious men preserve, for a time, the ungodly from temporal destruction, and are sometimes the means of their eternal salvation. See the case of Sodom.—Now if the salt loose its savour, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men: therefore, if men give themselves up to final apostacy, they are

fit for nothing but to be cast out of the kingdom of God, and banished to everlasting destruction. The most striking idea in this figure is perfectly hostile to the doctrine of universal salvation.

4. We are told, Matt. XII. 43, 45, (Luke XI. 24, 26.) that "when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out, and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Now this parable, if it may be called a parable, points out the life, character, and final condition of an apostate. The unclean spirit was cast out by the spirit of God, at his conversion.—The unclean spirit or principle returned at his fall from the grace of God. The seven other spirits, more wicked than the former, entering into the man, points out his total depravity and entire abandonment of all good. The last state of this man is worse than the first. Now if the doctrine of Universalism be true, the last state of every man is infinitely better than any former state, whatever it may have been. Hence, one of the leading features of this passage, is directly opposed to Universalism.

5. In Matth. XIII. 47., it is declared, that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to the

shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, and cast the bad (*sapra dead, or rotten*) away." On these words I remark: 1. The sea may signify the world. 2. The fish mankind. 3. The net the gospel. 4. The fishers the ministers of Christ. 5. The good and bad fish, saints and sinners; the former are to be gathered into churches, and the latter to be cast away. So shall it be, said our Saviour, at the end of the world; the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. Our Lord's explanation of this parable is extremely hostile to the doctrine of Universalism.

6. The parable of the *wheat* and the *tares*, recorded in Matth. VIII. 24, 30., and explained in Matth. XIII. 36—43., affords a very formidable bulwark, against the innovations of Universalism. Let us see the particulars of this parable. 1. The field is the world. 2. The good seed are the children of God. 3. The tares are the children of the devil. 4. The tares and the wheat, or the righteous and the wicked, are to remain together till the harvest. 5. The harvest is the end of the world, (not the end of the Jewish age, for the tares are still among the wheat.) 6. The reapers are the angels, who shall gather up the tares, and burn them in the fire. Thus it shall be, at the end of the world; for, the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire. I cannot see how the tares, after being burned, shall become

wheat; which must be the case if Universalism be true. I wish to see a consistent exposition of this parable; and yet in accordance with the principles of Universalism: but this is utterly impossible.

7. The parable of the ten virgins, Matth. xxv. 1—12, presents a difficulty of some considerable magnitude, to the reception of the doctrine of Universalism. This parable, in general, represents the state of the church in this world. The five wise virgins who took oil in their vessels to recruit their lamps, represent true christians, that obtain the grace of God, which will serve to sustain them in the hour of death, and at the day of judgment. The five foolish virgins, represent formal professors, who are blameless in the eyes of the world, have a lamp of outward profession, but make no provision for eternity by seeking the regeneration of the heart. The coming of the bridegroom may signify Christ's coming to judgment at the last day. The admission of the wise virgins to the wedding, may indicate the introduction of the saints into the kingdom of glory. While the rejection of the foolish may, as forcibly, point out the final rejection of the wicked, at the last day. The leading features of this parable, present a very strong objection, to the final salvation of all men.

8. The parable of the talents, Matth. xxv. 14, 30, is utterly irreconcilable with the doctrine of the Universalists. Let us review some of the leading features of this parable. 1. The travelling man may represent the Almighty God. 2. The servants signify all

mankind. 3. The goods or talents, which were distributed, signify the spiritual and temporal gifts, ecclesiastical ordinances, and all the other means of improvement that a beneficent Creator has given us. 4. The return of the Lord, or time of reckoning with the servants, means the day of judgment. 5. He that was admitted to the confidence and joy of his master, as a reward for improving the five talents, may signify such christians as suffered most in their master's cause, and done most for his honour in this world. 6. Those who were honoured for improving on the two talents, may signify such christians as had not many opportunities of doing good, but improved the opportunities which they had. 7. He that had the one talent taken from him, and given to him that had the five, may represent those sinners, at the last day, who never made any improvement on the opportunities and means of doing good, which God had given them. This man was called a "wicked," "slothful," "unprofitable servant," and was cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth; all which, in the most striking manner, point out the utter destruction of ungodly men, at the last day.

9. The parable of the feast, Luke xiv. 15, 24, presents an insuperable objection to the final salvation of all men. Let us examine the principal features of the parable, and see how it stands. The certain man is the Almighty God. The supper is the blessings and benefits of the gospel. Those that were bidden were the Jews, who, when they were

invited to attend the feast, preferred their lands, their oxen, &c. to the benefits of the gospel. This displeased the ruler of the feast. The "poor, the maimed, the half" and "the blind" that were invited to come in, from "the streets, lanes, highways" and "hedges," were the Gentiles, who have ever since enjoyed the privileges of the gospel of our Saviour. Now what I wish to note here particularly is this: when the master of the feast heard that those who were bidden, made light of the invitation, he was angry, and among other things said, "that *none* of those men that were bidden should taste of the supper." If this teaches any thing, it is this: those who absolutely refuse to comply with the invitations of the gospel, during their probationary state, shall finally be excluded from any part or share in its blessings and invaluable benefits.

10. The parable or history of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 18, 31, is utterly irreconcilable with Universalism. We have no intimation, in any part of the chapter, that this is a parable. Our Lord introduces the subject as a history, by saying, "there was a certain rich man," &c. To say it is not a history, but a parable, is the same as to say there was no such rich man, and therefore directly contradict our Lord. There is a proper name (Lazarus) in this passage, which is never the case with any parable. However, whether it be a parable or a history, the general features in it, are the same. But let us see what they are. In the character of the rich man and Lazarus, we have represented in general the character of the righteous and

the wicked, both in this world, and in that which is to come. They both lived in this world a certain time, which points out the probationary state of man. They both died and were buried, and their spirits entered into the invisible world; as shall be the case with all mankind. The rich man was in a state of misery, as is manifest from the metaphorical language used on that occasion; while the beggar was in a state of felicity, which is also manifest by the metaphorical expression, "Abraham's bosom," a phrase understood among the Jews, to mean the state of celestial bliss. Between the states of these two men, is placed, what is called, "a great gulph." Now whatever the great gulph may mean, it is certain that no one can pass over it, from one condition to the other. This was affirmed by Abraham. It is probable that the "great gulph" means, simply, the unchangeable decree of the immutable and incomprehensible Jehovah, who has fixed unalterably, the states of departed spirits. How the doctrine of Universalism can be reconciled, with the doctrine of this passage, I know not.

11. The parable or metaphor of the vine and its branches, presents a strong objection to the doctrine of the Universalists, John xv. 5, 6. A very few remarks, will illustrate this parable. God is the husbandman. Christ is the vine. His disciples, or believers in general, are the branches. To abide in the vine, is to continue in the faith of the gospel; the consequence of which is, much fruit shall be brought forth. Those apostates, or branches that do not abide in him, are "taken away,"

or "cast forth," and "cast into the fire, and they are burned." How can the doctrine of this text agree with the salvation of all men?

12. In Jude 12, the wicked are likened to trees. And to represent their endless destruction, in the most striking manner, the apostle says, they are "trees whose (untimely) fruit withereth, without (mature) fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." The propriety of this phraseology will appear, if we consider that, man is dead spiritually, in his natural state; that he may be quickened by divine grace, may lose his spiritual life, and be so lost to all sense of moral good that no more hope of his recovery remains, than there is of the foliage and verdure of a rotten tree, that is plucked up out of the soil, by the roots.

Now, sir, I leave these things with you, for your consideration. If you can prove, by fair criticism, and sound reason, that the chaff, after being burned, *shall become wheat*; the tree, after being burned, *shall produce fruit*; that the salt, after losing its savour, *is good for something*; the last state of the man *is not* worse than the first; that the rotten fish *shall become sound*; that the tares, after being burned, *shall become wheat*; that the foolish virgins *shall be admitted to the marriage*; that those who were bidden *shall eat of the supper*; if you can prove, in a satisfactory manner, that *men can*, and *will pass the great gulph*; that the branches of a vine, after being burned in the fire, *shall bring forth fruit*; and that a rotten tree, plucked up by the roots, *shall grow and flourish most luxuriantly*, I will say you are the greatest champion for Universa-

lism I ever had the pleasure of seeing. And furthermore, I will say that our blessed saviour chose a very strange set of metaphors, by which to convey the doctrine of Universalism.

I am, your's, &c.

JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER No. VII.

Baltimore, Jan. 4, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir,—Before examining your twelve objections against Universalism, I wish to observe, that in every instance you have assumed, that your proof texts refer to the future world; and on these assumptions you have founded your arguments. What aid you could expect from such assumptions, I am unable to conceive. Did you suppose, that our readers could not distinguish between assumption and argument? Did you imagine, that the anxious inquirer after truth, would be satisfied with such a superficial method of investigating subjects? In this letter, you have brought forward, twelve passages of scripture, on which, in a very grave manner, you have given your *opinion*, and which, you have *pronounced* extremely hostile to Universalism. On some of these, you speak with positiveness, and on others, with doubt. Thus we are told one text *has* this meaning, and another *may* have that. Now it would certainly be sufficient, in reply to all you have said, to go through with your twelve texts, and say, this *does* not signify as you have said, and that *may* not signify as you have supposed. And I pursue a different course, not because what you have said merits a reply, but because popular prejudice refers your proof texts to the future world.

1. Matt. iii. 12; (Luke iii. 16.) After giving your *opinion*, respecting what is intended by *wheat* and *chaff*; you *assume*, that the disposition made of these, shows the disposition, which will be made of mankind, at the day of judgment. Have you no argument against universalism, but popular opinion? As Pearce, Hammond, Lightfoot, Cappe, Kenrick, and every commentator, with which I have met, are against you; I will reply to your assumption by giving Clarke's exposition of the text:

'*Whose fan is in his hand: The Romans are here termed God's fan, as in ver. 10, they were termed his axe; and in chap. xxii. 7, they are termed his troops or armies. His floor.—Does not this mean the land of Judea, which has been long, as it were, the threshing floor of the Lord? God says he will now, by the winnowing fan, [viz. the Romans,] thoroughly cleanse this floor;—the wheat; those who believe in the Lord Jesus, he will gather into his garner, either take to heaven from the evil to come, or put in a place of safety, as he did the christians, by sending them to Pella, in Cœlosyria, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem. But he will burn up the chaff—the disobedient and rebellious Jews, who would not come unto Christ that they might have life. Unquenchable fire:—that cannot be extinguished by man.*' *Com. in loc.*

Referring this to the Jewish nation, removes your supposed difficulty, about the restoration of the wicked to life; for the judgment which they experienced was in this world.

2. Matt. iii. 10. (Luke iii. 9.) Here you assume that the cutting down of the trees repre-

sents the destruction, which will come on a part of mankind at a future judgment. The commentators referred to, in the other text, are against you on this. Clarke says: It was customary with the prophets, to represent the kingdoms, nations, and individuals, whose ruin they predicted, under the notion of forests and trees, doomed to be cut down. See Jer. xlvi. 22, 23. Ezek. xxxi. 3, 11, 12. The Baptist follows the same metaphor; the Jewish nation is the tree, and the Romans the axe, which, by the just judgment of God, was speedily to cut it down. It has been well observed, that there is an allusion here to a woodman, who, having marked a tree for excision, lays his axe at its root, and strips off his outer garment, that he may wield his blows more powerfully; and that his work may be quickly performed. For about sixty years before the coming of Christ, this axe had been lying at the root of the Jewish tree, Judea having been made a province to the Roman empire, from the time that Pompey took the city of Jerusalem, during the contentions of the two brothers Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, which was about sixty three years before the coming of Christ. See Josephus Antiq. l. xiv. c. 1—5. But the country might be still considered as in the hands of the Jews, though subject to the Romans, and God had waited on them now, nearly ninety years from the above time, expecting them to bring forth fruit, and none was yet produced; but he kept the Romans, as an axe, lying at the root of this tree, who were ready to cut it down the moment God gave them the commission.' *Com. in loc.*

Under this figure of cutting down trees, the prophets frequently represent temporal judg-

ments. See Isa. x: 33, 34. Jer. xlvi: 22, 23. Eze. xxxi: 1, 3, 10—12. As cutting down and burning trees represents a national judgment, your argument drawn from the impossibility of a burned tree returning to its verdure, has no force. I pretend not that the Jewish nation will return to its former state.

3. Matt. v: 13. (Luke xiv: 34, 35.) Here you assume that to be trodden under foot of men, represents endless suffering. But what is there in the figure which justifies such an assumption? Theophylact says, it signifies to be despised. Macknight explains it thus: "If ye, whose business it is to reform mankind, be wicked yourselves, ye cannot be reclaimed, but will be the most useless and contemptible of men." The words were addressed by our Lord to his disciples, who were the light of the world, but if they had lost their light, or become like unsavory salt, they would be cast out of the church. Nothing is said of another world. This is certain. How then can it prove endless misery?

4. Matt. xii. 43—45. (Luke xi. 24—26.) Here you *assume* that the state of the man with seven spirits was his final state. But the text says nothing of this. That represents him in two states—one with one evil spirit—the other with seven. When it says the last state of that man is worse than the first, it means, his state with seven evil spirits, is worse than with one. No allusion is made to death or eternity. This man was a figure of the Jewish nation. Grotius, I believe has given the sense of the text in the following words:

‘Christ appears to have had reference to the character of the Jewish people, at the two pe-

riods of their captivity in Babylon, and their destruction by Titus. Before their captivity, the people were exceedingly wicked, as may be seen in the Prophets; during their exile many began to reform, and under a superintending Providence, returned to their native land. But in the days of the Asmoneans, having again plunged into excessive wickedness, they added to their other crimes, a contempt of the Messiah, who came to them with a message of mercy, and exercising miraculous power. Having done this, they were abandoned by God, and became the most wicked of all men, as Josephus has described them in his history of their last days.' *Annot. in loc.*

5. Matt. xiii. 47. Here you assume, that the end of the world (*aion*) is the end of the material universe. By turning to Matt. xxiv. we shall see the falsity of this. There the disciples ask what shall be the sign of the end of the world (*aion*)? In answer to this, Jesus enumerates several signs, but says the *end* is not yet. He then mentions other signs, and says after these, the *end* (end of the world or age) shall come. In the same chapter he teaches, that that generation should not pass away, till all these things were fulfilled. The parable then, represents the effects of the Gospel before, and the separation which took place at, the destruction of Jerusalem. Furnace of fire—weeping and gnashing of teeth, are figures to represent the doom of the Jews. This is evident from the time to which the text refers, and from the use of the figures.

This explanation accords with the opinion of Dr. Clarke. He says: "It is probable, that this parable in its primary meaning, refers to the

Jewish state, and that when Christ should come to judge and destroy them by the Roman power, the genuine followers of Christ should escape, and the rest be overwhelmed in the general destruction. See chap. xxiv. 30."

6. Matt. xiii. 36—43. Here you assume, as in the previous text, that the end of the world, (*aion*) (the time of the harvest) is the end of the universe. The arguments adduced on that are equally applicable to this. It is only necessary therefore to consider the figures here used—furnace, weeping and gnashing of teeth. In Isai. xxxi. 9, we read that God's fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem. See also Ezek. xxii. 18, 20, 22. From these references, we see, that furnace is used in the Old Testament, to signify sore, temporal calamities. Now as our Lord spoke to Jews, who were familiar with the Old Testament, is it not reasonable to suppose, that he used it in the same sense, in which it there occurs? And if he did not, would he not have mislead, rather than instructed his hearers? Add to this the fact, that they were to be cast into this furnace at the end of the age or Jewish polity, and there can be no doubt of its having a temporal signification.

Dr. Clarke says, the figure "weeping and gnashing of teeth" was borrowed from the Jewish method of celebrating nuptial festivals, which took place at night, and in houses splendidly illuminated by lamps, torches and candles. Those excluded, he says, are represented as in outer darkness, and the shame to which they were exposed, and the cold which they suffered, are expressed by wailing, weeping and gnashing of

teeth. How forcibly then, do those figures represent the punishment of apostate christians. They were shut out from the kingdom; they were in outer darkness; they ceased to enjoy gospel privileges, the kingdom of heaven was taken from them. Hence their suffering and shame are forcibly expressed by wailing, weeping and gnashing the teeth. This application is strengthened by the fact, that the same figures are used in Matt. xxiv. 51, which is admitted to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem. This is the opinion of Pearce, Cappe and Hammond.

Your remark that the *end* of the world, cannot mean the end of the Jewish age, because tares are still among the wheat, will have no weight, when it is considered, that the good seed represented christians, and the tares apostates, those which were once a good seed.

The parable had a particular application to the end of the Jewish age: "So shall it be at the end of this world," (*aion*) which Pearce, Cappe and Clarke say, means the Jewish age. Your difficulty therefore, about the impossibility of tares becoming wheat, after being burned, is altogether imaginary, and founded on a false application of the text.

3. Matt. xxv. 1—12. Here you assume that the coming of the bridegroom represents Christ's coming to judgment at the last day. This is refuted, 1. By the commencement of the parable: *Then* shall the kingdom, &c. This adverb must refer to the time of which Christ had been speaking in the xxiv. chap. which was his coming to destroy the Jews. 2. It was a representation of the church at Christ's coming, which in this dis-

course, he says, should be in that age. 3. Christ commands the disciples to watch, because they knew not when he would come. He gave the same commands in chap. xxiv. where he confines his coming to that age. 4. This parable was a part of our Lord's answer to the disciples' question, when he should come, and in this answer, he declares it should be in that age.

Pearce. Ver 1. 'Then, i, e., at that time, and under those circumstances. This shows, that Jesus, in this chapter, is speaking on the same subject as in the foregoing one, viz. what was to happen at the destruction of the Jewish state. See Com. on ver. 13.'

Ver. 1. 'Rather, wherein the Son of man is to come. This plainly shows, that what was said before in this chapter relates to the destruction of the Jewish state, expressed by the Son of man's coming, as in chap. xvi. 27, 28. *Com. in loc.*

8. Matt. xxv. 14—30. (Luke xix: 11—27.) This parable, following that of the ten virgins and being a part of the same discourse, unquestionably refers to the same event. The arguments therefore, by which we have proved that the parable of the ten virgins, refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, we prove that this refers to the same time. Whitby, an orthodox writer, explains it thus: 'The parable here, as it respects our Lord Christ going into a far country to receive a kingdom, and return again, either respects his going to heaven to sit down at the right hand of God in majesty and glory, and so take possession of his mediatory kingdom, and then return to punish the unbelieving and obdurate Jews; or going by his apostles and disciples to erect a kingdom among the Gentiles, and then coming,

kingdom among the Gentiles, and then coming, as it were, back to punish the Jews, according to these words of his, this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached throughout the world for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the end [of the Jewish polity] come.—Matt. xxiv: 14.

On the parallel text in Luke, Whitby says: 'This parable doth certainly respect the Jewish nation, as appears, [1.] Because they are here said to reject Christ's kingdom, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us: and upon this account are styled his enemies, and devoted to destruction by him, which agrees still only to the Jews, ver. 27. [2.] To them is threatened the punishment of the unprofitable servants, to wit, to be cast out into utter darkness, &c. Matt. viii. 12, xxii. 13, Luke xiii. 28, Matt. xxv. 30. In fine, it is expressly said, he therefore spake this parable to them, because they thought the kingdom of God should immediately appear, ver. 11, and 12.' *Annot. in Luke*, xix. 12.

It will be remembered that you *assume* that this parable refers to the future state.

9. Luke xiv. 15—24. (Matt. xxii. 2—14.) Here you assume, that this teaches, that this world is a probationary state, and that those who do not accept the offers of grace here, can never be saved. That your assumption is unfounded is evident, 1. Because a few verses preceding the parallel text, our Lord told the Jews, that the kingdom of heaven (the Gospel covenant) should be taken from them and given to a nation, (Gentiles) bringing forth the fruits thereof. This with other sayings greatly enraged the chief priests and pharisees, and they would have laid hands on him, but they feared the people. This

elicited the parable under consideration, in which is represented the offer of the Gospel to the Jews, their rejection of it, the calling of the Gentiles, and the casting out of the Jews from the gospel privileges. 2. This is evident from the character given of those who came—they were the poor, maimed, lame and blind. Such were the Gentiles in the eye of a Jew. 3. The parable says, the king sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city. Such was literally the case with the Jews. 4. Many are called, but few chosen. The Jews were all invited, but few chosen. The parable, therefore, referred to the Jews, and their destruction by the Roman army. (So say Larnier, Gilpin and Whitby.) They experienced the sad fulfilment of our Lord's words—"none of those which were first bidden, shall taste my supper." The kingdom was taken from them, and they fell in judgment. What was spoken of them, however, related to their rejection of Christ and its effects on the nation. Nothing is said of the future world.

10. Luke xvi. 19—31. This you call a history; therefore the rich man, a spirit, had eyes, hands, tongue, and was in a flame. Lazarus was literally in Abraham's bosom. You will say perhaps, all these are figurative expressions. Very well; then the account must be a parable; for it contains little or nothing literal. Your reasons why it is a history, will weigh nothing, when it is considered that the parable preceding this commences, precisely as this does. There was a *certain* rich man. Now apply your language to this, and see the result. 2. All parables are founded on some common custom,

or familiar circumstance, some prevailing opinion, or some supposeable case. See for instance, the parables of the sower, lost sheep, lost piece of silver, prodigal son, unjust steward, &c. Now I believe that from the opinions of the Jews concerning *hades*, our Lord supposed a case on which he founded a parable, designed to show the rich, haughty, proud, selfish pharisees, who oppressed and persecuted the poor and humble christians, that the period was approaching, when their condition would be reversed, when the former would be overwhelmed in judgment, and the latter elevated to freedom, peace and joy. My limits; do not permit a defence of this application, and as it has but little bearing on the question, whether the text teaches endless misery, I will admit, that it is a history, that a rich man died and went to torment. What then? His place of torment was *hades*—a place which no critic, of any note, believes to be a state of endless suffering. Besides, this is the only text, in the whole New Testament, where *hades* occurs, which is thought to teach endless wo. Not only so, Paul 1 Cor. xv. says, at the resurrection we shall sing the song of victory over *hades*. Hosea says, *hades* (sheol in the Hebrew) shall be destroyed. Then the text in question cannot teach endless misery. This is beyond dispute. Perhaps you will say, the great gulph teaches endless misery. This cannot be, for it is represented as being in *hades*; and therefore, cannot exist after the destruction of *hades*. We read of no such gulph of separation after the resurrection.

Should you say, the gulph must exist forever, for nothing is said in the text of its destruction;

I answer, then *hades* must exist forever, for nothing is said of its destruction. Then Lazarus will never be raised from *hades*; for nothing is said in the text of his resurrection. 3. There will be no resurrection of the rich man, for the text says nothing of this. Now we may as reasonably assert all these, as assert that the misery of the rich man and the existence of the gulph are endless, because nothing is said of their limitation. He was speaking of *hades*, the state of man between death and the resurrection; and it was as unnecessary to say its misery was not endless as to say the pain of an eye or tooth is not endless. The nature of *hades* proved the limitation of its misery, the same as the nature of this world proves the limitation of its misery.

11. John xv. 5, 6. Being quite tired of replying to assumptions, I will dismiss this text, by giving an exposition from Kenrick. "If a man abide not in me, he is thrown away as a withered branch; that is, he will be treated as men treat withered branches, which they gather together and burn in the fire. This is generally, I believe, understood to refer to the punishment of the wicked in another life, which is usually represented by fire; but, as the rest of this discourse refers to the present life, perhaps Christ, by this language, only meant to express the useless and contemptible situation to which the apostles would be reduced, in the apprehension of the Divine Being, by deserting their christian profession. This is agreeable to what he says of them under a different figure: ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has lost its savor, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and

trodden under foot of men, Matt. v. 13. On the authority of these verses the papists have founded the cruel practice of burning heretics, rather than putting them to death any other way.' *Epos. in loc.*

12. Jude 12. Gilpin I believe has expressed the true sense of this text in the following words: 'They follow the examples of the very worst persons they find recorded in the bible history—the malice of Cain—the covetousness and seducing arts of Balaam, and the implacable opposition of Corah. A feast of charity they turn into wantonness. Like unwholesome air, they blast wherever they come—like withered trees, they only encumber the ground—like waves they spend their rage only in foam, like uncertain meteors, their light soon sets in darkness.

'The text says, *twice dead*: the apostle may mean, that they were once wicked Jews, and, having apostatized, are now wicked christians. Or, perhaps, he only expresses more strongly their deadness, as Virgil, expressing happiness, says—*terque, quaterque beati*.' *Expos in loc.*

What is said of these men is, as apostates; and is descriptive of their vile and useless character. But it is all assumption to say, the text teaches their endless punishment, for not a word is said of a future world.

Thus, Dear Sir, I have briefly considered, your twelve arguments; and I find that they are twelve assumptions! You have not, in a single instance, proved your application of a text!

Your play upon certain phrases in your proof texts requires a passing notice. I have once in this discussion, (Letter, No. 2.) exposed the absurdity of

such a course, in reply to a quotation, from Clarke, whom you have unfortunately imitated. He says Universalists contradict our Lord, who speaks of an unquenchable fire, and a worm which dieth not. But Isaiah uses the same language, with respect to events in this world; so that if there be an absurdity in our arguments, there is in the language of the prophets. Tares and chaff, unsavory salt, bad fish, foolish virgins, and a dead tree, are figures to represent the moral condition of apostates and Jews; the burning and destruction of these, represent their destruction at the close of the Jewish polity. All this we have proved, by an appeal to scripture, and by the testimony of orthodox critics. Your play therefore, upon these figures, is absurd in the extreme, because it applies to our final state, figures employed to express a temporal judgment. As well might you say, prove that the worms which Isai. (chap. lxvi. 24.) called undying, are still living, and the fire which he calls unquenchable is still burning, and I will believe the Bible, as to make the request you have. One would be a no greater perversion of figures than the other. God says, (Ezek. xxii. 18.) that the house of Israel had become dross in the midst of the furnace, and that they should be melted in his wrath. He also says, (Mal. iv. 1.) that they should be burnt up root and branch. Paul says, (Rom. xi) that they were branches broken off from the true olive tree. Now here are figures, equally as expressive as those, in your proof texts; but they simply refer to events in this world. Until therefore, you can show, that this burning and destruction refer to future torment, your play upon these figures, must be regarded as

a mere superficial turn, having no bearing on the real question. The same is true of your remark on the great gulph. Prove its existence in the resurrection state or its endless existence, and then you will meet the point in dispute, and not till then. I am quite tired of assumptions, and this playing around the question.

In conclusion, I will glance at the wide difference, between the nature of the proofs, on which partialisms rests and those on which Universalism rests. The former are ambiguous words, dark figurative expressions and parables, which some of the most noted orthodox writers explain in perfect accordance with Universalism. The latter are plain, unequivocal, literal declarations of holy writ, harmonizing with all the attributes of God. Of the former, we have a specimen in your letter, and for a specimen of the latter, see the following: And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me (John xii. 32.) For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. (Rom. v. 20.) And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. (1. John iv. 14.) Having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth even in him. (Eph. 1. 9, 10.) Here are no parables, no ambiguous terms, no figurative expressions. The language is plain and literal. Now if all men are drawn to Christ and made righteous, if Christ be the Savior of the

world, and if all things are gathered together in him, endless misery, cannot be the doctrine of Revelation, unless Revelation be contradictory.

I remain very respectfully your obe't. s'vt.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. VIII.

BALTIMORE, Dec. 18, 1834.

To Rev Otis A. Skinner:

DEAR SIR,—I think it expedient to make a few historical remarks respecting the rise and progress of Universalism, for the purpose of enabling the reader to form a more comprehensive view of the subject under investigation.

Origen, a native of Alexandria, born in the year 185, was the first man who embraced and propagated the doctrine of a universal restoration, of whom any written account has been transmitted to us. This man, who may be considered the father of the Universalists, was one of the most extravagant fanatics that ever troubled the world. Every one, acquainted with the history of his times, must be aware that he was the first who denied the fire of hell to be real and literal. He strenuously maintained the doctrine of the transmigration of souls from one body to another; that Christ would die in a future world for the redemption of devils; that the sun, moon and stars, had rational souls, and that all bodies after the resurrection should be of a round figure. He understood those words of our Lord:

“some men make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake” in a literal sense, and followed them to the letter, lest he should ever become guilty of any improprieties, arising from the propensities of the flesh. He was at length excommunicated from the christian church, by Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, as an egregious heretic. Such are some of the prominent features in the character of the *man*, who first propagated the heresy of Universalism. Some affirm, with great confidence, that the serpent in Paradise was the first preacher of Universalism, where God said to our ancestors, “in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die”; the serpent said they should not die, but live, and become wise into the bargain. God has said by the mouth of the apostle Paul, that the adulterer shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but the Universalists say he shall, and will inherit that celestial world. Hence, the coincidence between the doctrine of the serpent, and that of Universalism is manifest.

The commencement of Universalism, as an organized sect, may be traced to England and to the days of Wesley and Whitfield.—James Rely, a Whitfieldite preacher, dissatisfied with the Calvinistic doctrines of Whitfield, left his communion and gathered a congregation in London, to which he preached the future happiness of all men as the glory and essence of the gospel. This congregation is still in existence, and holds communion with four or five other congregations in England. This was the beginning of Universalism as a sect.

Among the followers of Rely was John

Murray, an Irishman by birth, and a Methodist by education. This man, after his conversion to Universalism, embarked for America, and in 1770 arrived in this country. He preached first at Cranberry, New Jersey, then in New York and Philadelphia, and soon after made his way into New England. In Gloucester, Mass. he found a few who were acquainted with the writings of Rely, and had embraced his faith; these he collected into a society, of which he was pastor. He died in Boston, 1815.

About the year 1780, Elhanan Winchester, a baptist minister in Philadelphia, began to preach the doctrine of a final restoration, and soon drew after him a considerable part of the congregation to a separate place of worship. Six years afterwards, he went to England and formed a congregation in London, which is now numbered among the Unitarian Churches of that country. He returned to the United States in 1794, and continued to itinerate till his death, which occurred in Hartford in 1797.

Murray and Winchester are generally acknowledged as the founders of Universalism in the United States. Of the two, Winchester was the more learned, and the more sincere; there is a spirit of sincerity and reverence for God and truth observable throughout his works, which I never apprehended in the works of any other Universalist.

Since the days of Winchester, several champions for Universalism have appeared, who have used all the sophistry they could command, in defence of the heresy under consideration. Among these may be ranked Dr.

Huntington, who wrote a posthumous book entitled "Calvinism Improved"; Dr. Chauncy, who published his "Salvation of all men"; Hosea Ballou, who published "Select Sermons, "Atonement," &c.; Mr. Balfour, who published his "first and second inquiry," "reply to Stuart," &c.; and Mr. Whittemore who published notes on the parables, to teach the world their true signification. Of all these oracles of Universalism, it may be fearlessly stated, that no two of them agree on any point but one, viz: that the punishment of the wicked is *not* endless! Murray said in a letter to a friend, that according to Winchester's doctrine, every man must finally be his own saviour. If I must suffer as much, in my own person, as will satisfy divine justice, how is, or how can Jesus Christ be, my Saviour? Winchester believed the doctrine of future punishment. Some of the leading heresiarchs of the present day deny that there is any punishment in a future state of existence. Some deny the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity and sacrificial death of Christ. These sentiments may be found in Mr. Ballou's works. Mr. Whittemore denies the existence of good and evil angels; and Mr. Balfour the immortality of the soul. And according to the "Christian Spectator" (vol. v. No. 11. for 1833,) the great mass of the Universalists deny nearly all the essential doctrines of Christianity, and hold an assemblage of not merely negative errors, but an accumulation of positive falsehoods, including nearly all the general principles of enmity and opposition to the kingdom of Christ. Such is the history of the rise and progress of Universalism, and if

the reader is desirous of further information on the subject, I refer him to Murray's life, *Mod. Hist. of Universalism*, "Christian Spectator," and the authors already mentioned.

Having made these preliminary remarks, I shall proceed to a farther investigation of the term *Gehenna*. As we agree respecting the derivation of this word, nothing remains to be examined but its use in the New Testament. In my *fourth* letter I stated that it related to future punishment in all the twelve places where it occurred in the New Testament. And in proof of this application of the word, I cited the Targums, Josephus, and Parkhurst; and showed that the passages of scripture, where it occurred, required this application of the word. All these proofs, I consider remain in their full force, unaffected by any thing you have said in reply. I did think you had something more plausible to urge in favour of your opinion, but I find nothing that has the appearance of argument. You say the Targums were written at the close of the *third* century. Dr. Clarke says two of them were written about the time of Christ; consequently, they show evidently, how the Jews of our Saviour's time understood the word *Gehenna*.

I was not a little surprised to find you assert that my quotation from Josephus was universally considered the work of some Christian writer, of the second or third century.—This is an assertion without the least shadow of proof, and must, consequently, go for nothing. But, if the quotation in question was written by a christian, of that age, as you assert, it would answer my purpose much bet-

ter; for, instead of proving that the Jews understood the terms *fire* and *worms* to mean endless punishment, it would prove that the primitive christians, who had their information direct from Christ and his apostles, understood *fire* and *worms* to signify endless misery, and therefore be a positive proof that I am right in my exposition of the term *Gehenna*.

I shall now lay before you some additional testimonies, from some of the most learned men in church or state, in favour of my interpretation of *Gehenna*.

Dr. Campbell, in his preliminary dissertations, says, "That *Gehenna* is employed in the New Testament to denote the place of future punishment, prepared for the devil and his angels, is indisputable. We do not find this place mentioned in this manner in the Old Testament. The word does not occur in the Septuagint. It is not a Greek word, consequently not to be found in the Greek classics. It occurs in the Greek Testament *twelve* times. In *ten* of these there can be no doubt: in the other two the expression is figurative; but scarcely will admit a question, that the figure is taken from the state of misery which awaits the impenitent. *Whios gehennes*, a child of hell, is equivalent in signification, with the expressions *whios diabolou*, son of the devil, *whios apolias*, son of perdition. In the other passage, "*set on fire of hell*" the meaning is evident. These two cannot be considered as exceptions, it being the manifest intention of the writers in both to draw an illustration of the subject from that state of perfect wretchedness."

Mr. Joseph Mede says, "Hence this place

(the Valley of Hinnom) so execrable, came to signify the place of the damned."

Dr. Scott, in his commentary, says, "The word (*Gehenna*) is frequently used in the New Testament, and always for hell, or the place of final punishment and misery."

Grove, in his Greek and English Dictionary, says, "Gehenna (the valley of Hinnom) hell, hell-fire, torments of hell."

Schrevelius says "Gehenna—locus suppliciorum æternorum," the place of eternal lamentation.

Bass explains Gehenna by "the valley of Hinnom," hell.

Donnegan defines it as follows:—Gehenna, a Hebrew word, New Testament, torture, punishment, hell.

Webster says, "This word (*Gehenna*) has been used by the Jews as equivalent to hell, place of fire or torment and punishment, and the Greek word is rendered by our translators by hell, and hell-fire."

Mr. Williams, editor of the Cottage Bible, says, "The valley south of Jerusalem, infamous for its idolatrous services, was called *Gehenna*, and made a type of hell."

To these I may add the testimony of Dr. Clarke, Dr. Whitby and Dr. Doddridge.

I have produced these *twelve* witnesses to let the reader see the weight of testimony in favour of my exposition of *Gehenna*. And, furthermore, I will say that, if you will produce one half the number of commentators and lexicographers who have said, in plain terms, that *Gehenna*, in the New Testament, does *not* signify future punishment, I will give up the argument so far as this word is con-

nected with it. But this you cannot do; for I suppose there is not one writer of character or reputation ever said any such thing.

I said in my *fourth* letter that the sense of the scriptures, where the word occurs, requires it to be understood of future misery; and this will be manifest to the attentive reader who will consider the connexion of the places where the word is used. When our Lord threatened the wicked with the punishment of *Gehenna*, he added as an equivalent expression to deepen the impression on the mind, "into the fire that never shall be quenched," "where their worm dieth *not*, and the fire is *not* quenched," Mark ix. 43—45. You wish to convince me that the never dying worm will die, and the unquenchable fire shall be quenched, by referring me to certain texts in the Old Testament, where the "unquenchable fire" was used in reference to the things of this world. Now, in reply, I would say, 1. The phrase "unquenchable fire," in those instances, signified that the fire would continue to burn so long as the fuel or subjects of burning continued to exist. It is true the fires became extinct, but not till all the fuel was entirely exhausted, so that it never afterwards, in any instance, returned to its original state. 2. The phrase when applied to a future state of existence as it unquestionably is, in the above cited places, must mean endless, because fuel never can be entirely exhausted or consumed.

As I consider your exposition of the phrase "kill the body" absurd in the extreme, I shall place in juxtaposition, the parallel texts where

the phrase occurs, that I may give it a thorough investigation, and thereby present it in its true signification.

Matth. x. 28.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (*Gehenna.*)

Luke xii. 4, 5.

Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do.

But I forewarn you whom you shall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. (*Gehenna.*)

Respecting these texts it may be observed, 1. That they contain a most solemn warning, given by our Saviour, concerning the true object of fear. 2. Two objects of fear are mentioned—God and man. 3. God is to be feared as much above man, as the soul is superior to the body, and as the power of God is above that of man. 4. Man's power is limited; he can only kill the body, he cannot injure the soul. But God's power is unlimited, therefore he can not only kill the body, but cast both soul and body into hell at the day of judgment. Now I think nothing in all the world can be clearer, or prove more fully that *Gehenna* signifies future misery, than these texts. What man, or what temporal fire could affect, or injure an immortal soul? Certainly no man, no temporal fire. But the Almighty God, at the last day, can cast both soul and body into hell, which he has declar-

ed he will do, to all the finally impenitent.— You leap over this text by saying that *apokteino*, “to kill,” should be rendered to *torture*, to *afflict*. Who ever heard of such a translation of this word before! Parkhurst says the word is derived from *apo*, intensitive, and *kteino*, to *kill*, and signifies, *to kill, murder, butcher*.— Bass says it signifies, *to kill, destroy, murder, butcher*, consequently the present translation of the word is perfectly correct. The word *psuche*, rendered *soul*, you say means animal life. Parkhurst shows that it has *nine* significations in the scriptures, and refers to Matth. x. 28, one of the texts in question, where it signifies “the human soul or spirit, as distinguished from the body.” Now, as I have cleared this text, by the authority of so great a man as Parkhurst, from the gloss you put upon it, to turn aside its force which is levelled directly against your system, I shall consider another error into which you have fallen, concerning the power of the Jews to take away life. You say the Jews had no power to take away life. This is true in a certain sense. They had no power to take away life for secular offences, or offences against the state; neither could they crucify, which was a Roman method of punishment. This political or kingly power was taken from them when Judea became a Roman province. But they retained the power to take away life by burning and stoning for ecclesiastical offences, or offences committed against the church. To this ecclesiastical power Pilate referred, when he said to the Jews, take him and judge him according to your law. The Jews replied, it is not lawful for us to put any man to death,

thereby indicating that they charged him with offences against the state, and not against the church. This accorded with the saying of Jesus, signifying what death he should die, when he said they would deliver him to the Gentiles to crucify him, *Matth. xx. 19.* That the Jews still retained the power of killing for ecclesiastical offences is evident from the fact of their killing several persons. They stoned Stephen to death, not in a riotous outrage, as some suppose, but by a regular mode of procedure, *Acts vii.* They stoned Ben Sarda at Lydda. *Hieros, Sanhed, fol. 25, 4.* They burned the priest's daughter alive that had been taken in the act of adultery, *Rab. Sanhed, fol. 52, 1.* These historical facts show that the Jews retained the power of punishing ecclesiastical offences with burning and stoning. For a more detailed account of this matter the reader is referred to *Dr. Clarke* and *Dr. Lightfoot*, on *John, xviii. 32.*

I wish it to be distinctly understood that I consider the use of *Gehenna* in the twelve places where it occurs in the New Testament, as an unanswerable argument against the doctrine of Universalism; however, I leave the reader to judge in this case.

Your saying that *Gehenna* was a place of punishment to which the Jews, and not the Gentiles, were exposed, reminds me of the law of retaliation. The Jews considered themselves the children of heaven, while they devoted the Gentiles to a total destruction.—You being a Gentile, by way of retaliation, say the punishment of *Gehenna* was for Jews, and not for Gentiles. It was remarked, that the Europeans paint the devil *black*, while

the Ethiopians, in return, paint him *white*.—The Jews believe in the endless punishment of the wicked. Whence had they this information? Certainly from the prophets and the holy scriptures.

There is one palpable contradiction in your *fourth* letter. You say the Jews had no power to take away life; and you say the destruction in *Gehenna* is for Jews only. Now, I will give you your choice of two things; if you say the Jews had no power to kill, it is certain they could not burn any person in *Gehenna*—therefore the destruction in *Gehenna* is in a future state. If you say they had power to kill, then they are not to be feared as they can only kill the body; but God can cast both into *Gehenna* or endless misery in a future state. Take which side you please.

I am, your's, &c.

JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER No. VIII.

BALTIMORE, Jan. 17, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:—

DEAR SIR,—Whitfield once remarked, while preaching, that if sinners would wander to the devil, he must wander after them. And as you in your historical remarks, have entirely wandered from the great point in dispute, I am compelled to wander after you, in order to correct some of your erroneous statements.

1. You say Origen was the first Universalist. This is a great mistake. The Basilidians, Carpocratians and Valentinians, held the sentiment; and though they were styled heretics, and their systems were often attacked by the orthodox, their sentiments respecting the restoration were never called in question. Universalism is advocated in the *Sibylline Oracles*, a work published about the year 150, to convert heathens to the Gospel. The renowned and illustrious Clemens Alexandrinus, the teacher of Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and of the celebrated Origen, was a Universalist. He was distinguished for his extensive acquaintance with history, poetry, philosophy, mythology and the scriptures. He died in the year 217. Thus we find Universalism very prevalent, before the days of Origen; and before we find the eternity of misery advocated by a single writer. Tertullian, a man severe, morose, superstitious and fanatical—a man who said he should admire, laugh, exult and rejoice, when he saw kings groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness, is supposed to have been the first christian who asserted that misery will be of equal duration with happiness. The first censure ever passed upon Universalism was in the year 394. And even this related not to the salvation of man, but of devils; and after it many advocated with impunity the salvation of all men. Indeed the doctrine continued to spread and to receive the undivided support of many of the bishops and ministers, and a large portion of the laity, until crushed by the bulls of popes. Controversy could not check

its onward course; learning and criticism could not put it to flight. No! These were the elements in which it flourished, the means by which it achieved its conquests. Nothing but banishing its advocates and burning their productions could put it down.

2. Your remarks on Origen are illiberal and unjust in the extreme; for instead of being an extravagant fanatic, he stood unrivalled as an interpreter of the Bible; as a defender of christianity, as a scholar, a christian and a philosopher. Like all of the christian fathers, he was in some respects visionary; but for one, I would as soon believe with him in the transmigration of souls, as with Wesley in the salvation of beasts, or with Clarke, that the ghost of Samuel appeared to Saul. Mosheim says, "Origen surpassed all others in dilligence and assiduity, and that his famous Hexapla, though almost entirely destroyed by the waste of time, will even in its fragments, remain an eternal monument of the incredible application with which that great man, laboured to remove those obstacles, which retarded the progress of the Gospel." He also says, "Origen had an undoubted right, to the first place among the interpreters of the Scriptures in his age." Such was Origen with all his errors, according to Mosheim.

Eusebius gives him the same character, represents him as the most learned and pious, as the greatest and most industrious man of his age; and as having exerted an unbounded influence in the Church. Ministers and people flocked to his meetings; Bishops attended him wherever he went; and some of the most

distinguished were his pupils. Could he then have been that wretched fanatic which you represent? So far from this, his name is a monument of glory to our faith—a monument which will stand in undiminished strength, ages after the last fragment of our productions shall have been consigned to oblivion.

3. You say, that he was excommunicated as an “egregious heretic,” by the Council at Alexandria. Such is not the fact. Eusebius and Mosheim both certify, that Demetrius obtained his degradation from the sacerdotal office to appease his resentment and gratify his envy and hatred; and that he urged against him an act, which for years he had applauded, and which was done while Origen was but a youth. Besides, Origen’s excommunication met the highest displeasure of the bishops of Achaia, Palestine, Phœnecia and Arabia. So much for his “egregious heresy.”

4. You say, the serpent was the first preacher of Universalism. This is a vulgar saying, unworthy a place in an honorable discussion. To test its truth, let us compare the serpent’s preaching with partialism and universalism. The former teaches, that God threatened Adam with endless punishment, but that the threatening was not executed; the latter teaches, that he threatened him with spiritual death, and that he did die on the day he transgressed. Now which agrees with the serpent’s preaching.—Did Adam, in the day he transgressed, go to an endless hell? Did he *ever* go to such a hell? If not, and partialists rightly define the

threatening, the serpent preached the truth; it came to pass as he said. Adam did not die. Say with Universalists, that God threatened a spiritual death, and the difficulty is at once removed; for such a death Adam did experience, in the very day he sinned.

Your remarks on Paul's declaration, that "the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God," are uncandid and unjust; and they betray a sense of the weakness of your own cause. Do you not believe, that the unrighteous can be regenerated? And do not Universalists believe that all the unrighteous will be regenerated? Then why throw at us, the false charge, of teaching, that people are to be saved in sin?

There are several other errors, in what you are pleased to dignify, as historical remarks, that serve to show your ignorance of our order, and that should admonish you to be cautious in giving the history of another's creed. The most prominent of these, is the statement, that among what you sneeringly call the *oracles* of Universalism, no two agree on any point, save one. This is too absurd to require contradiction. But suppose such were the fact: Did I not show, in letter No. 1, greater, far greater differences of faith among partialists than Universalists? When you have answered that, it will be time to refer again, to the shades of difference in our works.

In the Letter before me, you repeatedly denounce Universalism as heresy. Besides all this, you quote from the *Christian Spectator*, to prove that it is a heresy, a system of falsehood, including nearly all the general principles of

enmity and opposition to the kingdom of Christ—and thus it is you treat the subject. I call for argument, and you give a confused and false history of Universalism; I call for scripture proof, and I am met with the cry of heresy, backed up by the *Christian Spectator*. And what, pray tell me, has all this to do with the question?

Having thus considered your historical remarks, I will proceed to an examination of your arguments on Gehenna. Although you have said, that I have advanced nothing plausible, and that your arguments of letter No. iv. still remain in their full force, it will be perceived, that you have passed in silence a great portion of my letter, and have not attempted to refute the proofs, by which I have shown that Gehenna has no reference to future woe: and yet you say, I have proved nothing. This sir, is quite a summary way of settling points, and it serves to fill up a letter, when argument is wanting.

1. The Targums.—On the authority of Jahn I stated, that these were written at the close of the third century. To his testimony I will now add that of Eichhorn, Bertholdt and Bauer; who have come to this conclusion, from their style, fables, perversions of prophecies concerning Christ, and from the silence of the early Jews and christian fathers respecting them. Consequently they do not shew how Gehenna was understood in the times of our Saviour.

2. On the authority of a Boston work, in which I have full confidence, I stated that the piece entitled, discourse concerning Hades in

Whiston's edition of Josephus, was universally considered the work of some christian writer at the close of the second or beginning of the third century. If you deny this, I will obtain the proof. Now admitting the passage an interpolation, it would answer your purpose much better, I am unable to conceive; for how does the opinion of a christian in the third century, prove the prevailing opinion in the days of Christ? As well might you say, the wild reveries of the *Epistle of Barnabas* were dictated by Christ and his apostles, as to say, that the sentiments of christians in the third century were.

3. Your array of names to sustain your definition of Gehenna, may influence the superficial reader, but they certainly do not meet the question. Suppose I should bring twelve writers equal in learning and talents to those you have quoted, who are agreed in teaching the doctrine of reprobation and the final perseverance of the saints. would you consider this satisfactory proof of these doctrines? The writers to which you refer, though men of learning, are but men, and their opinions are to be received no further than they accord with revelation. To the law and to the testimony, our appeal must be made. From these, I will produce twelve facts, that must weigh as much in the scales of truth, as the opinions of twelve partialists.

1. Gehenna is never used in the Old Testament to signify future woe. 2. Jeremiah, (vii. 29—34; xix. 4—15,) uses it figuratively to represent the destruction of Jerusalem; and his representation had a literal fulfilment at

the time Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, when human bodies were meat for fowls and beasts, parents ate their children, and they buried in Tophet or Gehenna, till there was no place. 3. The early disciples were Jews, and must have understood Gehenna in the sense of the prophets. 4. No explanation was ever given by our Lord, to show, that he used it differently from the prophets; and if he did he must have misled his hearers. 4. The Jews, when threatened with the damnation of Gehenna, are told, in the same discourse, that it shall come on that generation. 6. What the Saviour, Matth. x. 28, represents by Gehenna, he expresses in verse 30, by the phrase losing the life. 7. In the same chapter he declares, that the time (verse 23) should be before the disciples had gone over the cities of Israel, or when the Son of man should come, thus showing, that he referred to the destruction of Jerusalem.— 8. In every case where the disciples are warned of Gehenna, they are told that their *whole bodies* should be destroyed. Now why was this, if a spiritual punishment were intended? 9. The word Gehenna is found only twelve times in the New Testament, once addressed to Jews, twice in a sense which none consider to teach endless woe, and the rest of the times, it is addressed to the disciples. It was not however nine times addressed to them: probably not more than five times, for the Evangelists all recorded the same discourse. Therefore, either Christ preached too little about hell, or Ministers now preach too much. 10. The Jewish sects of our Lord's day, did not

represent future punishment by the emblem of fire; and as this is the sense in which Gehenna is always used in the Targums and christian writers, it could not have been used by our Lord to represent future woe. 11. John, who wrote his gospel for the Gentiles, never mentions Gehenna. 12. Paul, Peter and Luke, are also silent respecting it. Why was this, if it represented future torment?

Here sir, are twelve facts which have never yet been answered. Most of them are contained in my fourth letter; but you have found it convenient to give them no reply.—Doubtless such will be the case in this instance; but as they are an array, quite as formidable as your twelve commentators, I must hold them up for consideration.

You say when our Lord threatened the wicked with the punishment of Gehenna, he added as an equivalent expression to deepen the impression on the mind, “into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” In reply to this, I will observe,

1. Christ never addressed this language to the wicked, but to his disciples. He only once threatened *sinner*s with the punishment of Gehenna; and in that case, he added nothing respecting the fire and worm. How will you reconcile this with the idea, that an endless hell was intended? And how different is this from the present popular method of preaching hell-fire! Now, it is preached altogether to sinners; but then whatever was intended by it, was addressed to the disciples.

2. The adding of the phrases, “where their

worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," is an argument against your application of the text, rather than in its favour. This is evident because, Isaiah (LXVI. 24) represents the destruction of the Jews under the same figures; and our Lord using it in Mark IX. is the strongest proof that could be given, of his having reference to the same event. Isaiah's prediction was literally fulfilled, at the destruction of Jerusalem; and as the Saviour uses the same language, and alludes to the body, like the prophet, he without doubt refers to the same destruction. As therefore our Lord's language had no reference to fatuity, the fire of which he speaks can no more be endless, than the one of which the prophet speaks, for "there is nothing to feed it." Hence we see, that the phrases under consideration, are as you admit, equivalent to Gehenna, and that both are applied by inspired prophets, to the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus, therefore, our Saviour used them.

5. Concerning the two texts, which you have placed in juxtaposition, I will remark, 1. Luke says nothing of casting the spirit into hell; and in all the places which speak of Gehenna, nothing is said of punishing the spirit, but the body is mentioned. Thus Luke says, fear him who after he hath killed the body, hath power to cast (the body) into Gehenna. So Matthew says, destroy both soul (life) and body in Gehenna. 2. Gehenna had long been a place where the filth of Jerusalem was deposited, where criminals were executed, and where dead bodies were permitted to lie unburied. This explains our Lord's

language, cast the body into Gehenna, destroy the body in Gehenna: that is, leave it unburied, exposed to beasts, birds and worms, where the worm did not die and the fire was not quenched. This men could not do, for sympathy and respect for the dead would prevent it; public sentiment would not allow so shameless a violation of common feeling. But in the terrible judgment which God was about to bring upon that people, they would be destroyed soul (life) and body in Gehenna.—After they were killed, they would be cast into Gehenna. Such, according to Josephus, was the case with thousands; for in the siege of Jerusalem, the living and dead were thrown into Gehenna, where they remained a prey to fire, worms and beasts. Viewed in this light, the mention of casting the body into Gehenna, and of destroying it there, showed the terrible nature of the impending judgment.

3. In the two chapters of Matthew and Luke, from which the texts you have placed in juxtaposition are taken, it is expressly said, that those should lose their lives, that did not follow Christ, while those should save their lives, that did follow him; and to impress this more deeply upon the mind, Jesus reminds them of his coming to destroy Jerusalem, when punishment would be inflicted on his enemies.

4. Gehenna was the figure to represent this punishment. This I have quite fully illustrated in my fourth letter.

5. The same word rendered life in Matth. chap. x. 39, (lose his life) is the one rendered life in Matth. x. 28, and Luke xii. 4, 5. Now as both refer to the same event, it is evident that the (psuche)

life or soul is the same in both. The *opinion* of Parkhurst will not answer as a reply to this.

For these reasons I must say, that it is clear as noon-day to me, that in the texts under consideration, our Lord had no reference to the future world. And as all the passages where Gehenna occurs are silent respecting punishing the spirit, I do think you must yield the point.

5. Your remarks on *apokteino* (kill) require but a passing notice. My criticism is met by a sneer and denounced as a gloss. I am told too that Parkhurst, Grove and Bass, are against me. But such is not the case. Parkhurst says that *apokteino* is used figuratively; and refers to Rom. vii. 11; 2 Cor. iii. 6, as instances. The Lexicons of Grove and Bass I have not before me, but Donnegan, who is certainly as good authority, says, it means, "to torture, torment, render miserable or wretched." In justification of this definition, let us observe, 1. That when it is said, God is able to destroy soul and body, a different word (*apolesai* not *apokteino*) is used. This word signifies death in all the following places: Matth. ii. 13; xviii. 20; Mark xi. 18; John x. 10; Mark iv. 38. It is a general word for death and the destruction of a thing. See Matth. ix. 17; Heb. i. 11. Now why was this different word used, if *apokteino* here signified to put to death? 2. *Apollesas* is the word used to express the loss of life, in a verse (39) following the one (Matth. x. 28) which says, God is able to destroy soul and body. This shows, that what is meant by losing the life, in verse

39, is meant by God's destroying the life (soul) in verse 28. Hence, *apokteino* could not have been used, to signify death. My criticism therefore is just—Fear not those who will torture or scourge you; but fear God who will destroy you with the Jews.

6. What you have written respecting the power of the Jews to take life, does not meet the question. You say they had power to take it for certain offences. But of this you have given no proof. You refer me to Clarke, but he says it is only *probable*, that they had this power. You say, Stephen was stoned by a regular procedure; Clarke says, it was done tumultuously. By turning to Acts vii. you will see, that he was killed in a riotous manner. I must therefore, still believe, what the Jews said to Pilate, "that it was not lawful for them to take the life of *any* man."

Had I not already extended this letter to a sufficient length, I would present some additional proofs in favor of the position taken respecting the power of the Jews. I will however observe, 1. That though it is said (Luke xi. 49) they would slay prophets and apostles, kill and crucify them (Matth. xx. 34) it does not follow that they had power to do this; for in all countries when death is inflicted, it is ascribed to the prosecutor and judge. Thus the Jews are said to have crucified Christ, though it was done by the Romans. In like manner it is said, the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son, and children shall cause their parents to be put to death. But it was never legal according to any constitution in the world, for children to

put their parents to death. This language then signifies, that they would procure the death of their parents. 2. The Roman Lawyers, as quoted by Lardner, state, that the power of life and death was not in the hands of the Jews.

7. The last paragraph but one in your letter, contains a strange medley, which I confess my inability to understand. You have jumbled together, the law of retaliation, the colour of European and Ethiopian devils, and an assertion that the Jews derived the doctrine of endless misery from the Old Testament. All this is a reply to that troublesome fact, which you have so often attempted to answer, viz. that none but Jews and those connected with their nation, were ever threatened with Gehenna.

8. In your last paragraph I am accused of a palpable contradiction. Not quite so fast. My position is, that Gehenna was a figure of the punishment, which God would inflict upon the Jews. Your contradiction therefore is only imaginary.

Thus, sir, do we see, that the word on which such unshaken reliance has been placed, is no proof of endless woe. In rescuing this from your hand, I take away the main pillar of endless misery; for when partialists have been driven from all their other grounds, they turn to Gehenna as their last resort.

I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. IX.

BELL AIR, Jan. 3, 1835.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir—I find some remarks in your fifth letter which make it expedient for me to consider the noun *aion* a little more maturely.

You charge me with perverting the views of my authorities, and say by my rule you could prove *aion* never means endless; for all say it signifies age. Please show one instance of perversion. I have given the time and place where all my authorities were printed, that the reader may be able to find them and examine for himself. All the authorities I have consulted say *aion* signifies eternity, among other significations, and in general give eternity as the first or primary signification of the word; and Clarke, no mean authority, says, no word can more forcibly point out eternity. That the word is sometimes used in a restricted sense, I have shown in more than thirty instances. But, to settle the point, I will say that for one lexicographer you can find, who says the word does not mean eternity, I will produce one dozen who say it does mean eternity, or give up the point. In citing authorities I wish you would give both the date and place where the book was printed, as I strongly suspect some of your quotations to be mere forgeries. I shall not regard any

quotation, in future, as any authority, unless it has these concomitants. A large portion of your letter contains nothing but personal abuse. To this you may resort when argument fails; but, I now say, once for all, that I will make no reply to anything of this kind in future; so you shall have it all to yourself. I write for the benefit of the sincere inquirer after truth, and the better part of the community, therefore I cannot descend to anything of a base character.

You say that *aion* in one of my thirty-three cases of limited signification, means the eternal world, in Luke xx. 35. On a mature examination of the text, I was led to believe you were right, and accordingly, I shall place it with those signifying endless duration. Since writing the last letter, a copy of the Cottage Bible fell into my hands. This work has large explanatory notes attached to it, by Thomas Williams. In the note on Matt. xxv. 46, the editor says, "*aion* occurs 104 times in the New Testament; 32 times in a limited sense, and 72 times in an endless sense. This account agrees precisely with the result of my own investigation, with the exception of the one instance which you mentioned, and serves very much to confirm me in the belief that I am right concerning the meaning of *aion* in the New Testament.

I would further remark that Dr. McIlvaine, the celebrated translator of Mosheim's Church History says, among other things, in a note appended to that work, (vol. 1, page 34, Harrod's edition, Balt. 1832,) that, "these (the eastern) philosophers used the word *Chronos* as the measure of corporeal and changeable objects; and *aion* as the measure of such as were immutable

and eternal, and, as God is the chief of those immutable beings which are spiritual, and consequently not to be perceived by our outward senses, his infinite and eternal duration was expressed by the term *aion*; and that is the sense in which the word is now commonly understood. It was however, afterwards attributed to other spiritual and invisible beings; and the oriental philosophers, who lived about the time of Christ's appearance upon earth, and made use of the Greek language, understood by it the duration of immutable and eternal things, or the period of time in which they exist. Nor did the variations, through which this word passed, end here. From expressing only the duration of beings, it was by a metonymy, employed to signify the beings themselves. Thus God was called *aeon*, and the angels were distinguished also by the title of *aeons*." This extract from the Doctor's note will cast some considerable light on the meaning of the word as used by the New Testament writers.

I shall now consider it more particularly as employed by the evangelists and the apostles.

The noun *aion* occurs in the New Testament 104 times, reckoning each reduplication as a single instance, 63 times in the singular number, eighteen times in the plural, and 23 times in a reduplicate form. It is thirty-two times used in a metaphorical sense, and signifies limited duration; twenty-six times in the singular, and six times in the plural. The word is seventy-two times used to signify unlimited or endless duration; thirty-seven times in the singular, twelve times in the plural,

and twenty-three times in a reduplicate form. In sixty-one places of the seventy-two, it is governed by the proposition *eis*, in which construction it never means limited duration, in the New Testament; leaving eleven places in which it must be understood in the endless sense though not governed by this preposition.

1. The eleven places in question are as follow:—It is used six times in the singular number, in three of which it signifies the eternal world. Mark x: 30. Luke xviii: 30; xx: 35; in one place all past time, John ix: 32; in one from eternity. Acts xv: 18: in one it expresses the duration of Christ's glory. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Four times in the plural, (*viz.*) one time to express the duration of the glory of the ever blessed God. 1 Tim. i. 17; twice to signify that period of time which the mystery of the Gospel lay concealed. Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 26, and one time to signify the duration of God's purpose. Eph. iii. 11; one time in a reduplicate form, translated, "throughout all ages, world without end," employed to express the duration of the glory of God. Eph. iii. 21. That the word in these eleven cases ought to be understood in the endless sense, I have no hesitation to assert in the most positive manner; however, I wish the sincere enquirer after truth to examine all the places and decide for himself.

The noun, when governed by *eis*, is always to be taken in the endless sense. It is used in this construction thirty-one times in the singular number, as follow: twice concerning the fruit of the cursed fig tree. Matth. xxi. 19; Mark xi. 14; once respecting the future world.

Heb. vi. 5; once concerning God's promise to the seed of Israel. Luke i. 55; once to describe the duration of the effects of drinking the water of life. John iv. 14; twice to point out the duration of the effects of eating the bread of life. John vi. 51, 58; twice in relation to the sinner and the son of God dwelling in the house of God, John viii. 35; six times to express the duration of the effects of keeping the sayings of Christ and doing the will of God, John viii. 51, 52; x. 28; xi. 26; 1 John ii. 17; 2 John 2; once to express the duration of the existence of Christ, John xii. 34; once in relation to the washing of Peter's feet, John xiii. 8; once to signify the duration of the spirit's continuance with the children of God, John xiv. 16; once to express the duration of the period that Paul would abstain from flesh to save his weak brother, 1 Cor. viii. 13; and once to point out the duration of the righteousness of the good man, 2 Cor. ix. 9. The word is used six times to point out the endless duration of the priesthood of Christ, Heb v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17, 21, 24, 38; twice to signify the endless duration of God's word, 1 Pet. i. 23, 25; once to signify the duration of Christ's glory, 2 Pet. iii. 18; and the word is employed three times to express the duration of future punishment! Mark iii. 29, 2 Pet. ii. 17; Jude 13.

This word in this construction, is used eight times in the plural form, as follow :—three times to express the power and glory of the ever blessed God, Matt. vi. 13; Rom. xi. 36; xvi. 27; once, to point out the duration of the reign of Christ, Luke i. 33; three times to express the

duration of the blessedness of the Almighty God, Rom. i. 25; ix. 5; 2 Cor. xi. 31; and one time to express the eternity of Christ, Heb. xiii. 8.

This word, in this construction, is used twenty-two times in a reduplicate form, as, *eis tous aionos ton aionon*, translated 'forever and ever.' This phrase does not occur in the Septuagint version of the scriptures; consequently we need not appeal to that version for any information respecting its signification. We are to look to the several places in the New Testament where it occurs; and, by this means ascertain its true meaning. Now it is obvious to every attentive student of the New Testament that this phrase was never used by any of the inspired writers with reference to temporal things, in any instance; but always in relation to eternal things, and to express their endless nature; so that in every instance it must be understood in the unlimited sense. To make this evident, I shall refer to all the places where it occurs, and ascertain the objects to which it is applied, They are as follow:—It is eight times employed to express the duration of the glory of the ever blessed God, Gal. i. 5; Phil. iv. 20; 1 Tim. i. 17; 2 Tim. iv. 18; Heb. xiii. 21; 1 Pet. v. 11; Rev. i. 6; vii. 12; once, to express the duration of the praise and dominion of God, 1 Pet. iv. 11, five times to express the duration of the existence of the Deity, Rev. iv. 9, 10; v. 14; x. 6; xv. 7; once to point out the endless duration of God's throne, Heb. i. 8; once to express the eternity of Christ, Rev. i. 18; once to express the duration of Christ's reign Rev. xi. 15; once

to express the duration of the honour, power and glory of Christ, Rev. v. 13, and once to express the duration of the saint's reign in the eternal world, Rev. xxii. 5; and this phrase is three times employed to express the endless duration of future punishment!!! Rev. xiv. 11; xix. 3; xx. 10.

From the foregoing citations and remarks, it is manifest that the inspired writers of the New Testament used the word *aion* both in the singular and the plural form to express the utmost bounds of unlimited duration; and that much more frequently than to express limited duration. The word is three times used in the singular form governed by the preposition *eis*, to designate the duration of future misery, in which construction it is never used in a limited sense. This, to say the least, is very alarming; and, certainly should create strong doubts in the breast of every considerate Universalist respecting the truth of his doctrine. But,

The reduplicate form of this word, I consider to be an incontestible evidence in proof of the doctrine of endless misery. The same phrase which is employed to express the eternity of God, Christ, God's throne, his glory, and power, and the glory of the saints in heaven, is employed by the same writer, under the same circumstances precisely, to express the duration of the punishment of the wicked!! The man that can fritter this away by sophistry and critical torture, can as readily explain away the existence, throne, power and glory of God and the future happiness of the saints; as we have no stronger language in all the holy scriptures to

express the one than we have to express the other. This argument never was answered by any Universalist, and never can be answered. The circumstance of this phrase being coupled with the phrase "day and night" when applied to the misery of the wicked, is nothing against the present application of it; as we find the phrase "day and night" coupled with the celestial exercises of the redeemed before the throne of God, Rev. iv. 18; vii. 15; therefore, this phrase is so far from limiting the duration, either of the misery of the wicked or the happiness of the righteous, that it signifies the perpetuity of the things to which it is applied. It is used in this sense in Josephus's discourse on Hades. But in order to get rid of this difficulty you were driven into the absurdity of representing the celestial glory and God's throne as being on the earth, contrary to our Lord's declaration (Matt. v. 34, 45,) where he affirms the divine throne to be in heaven, as distinct from the earth. Besides all this, in your second letter, you gravely tell me that in all the three places of punishment the phrase is coupled with the phrase "day and night;" whereas, if you examine Rev. xix. 3, you will find one of the three so far from being connected with it, that it does not occur in the same chapter at all. I suppose you made this blunder by taking the matter at second hand; for I cannot think you ever examined the texts yourself, as I don't believe you capable of asserting a palpable falsehood.

Your question "if *aion* in the singular means endless, how could it be used in the plural?" I consider altogether irrelevant. The question,

does it mean endless both in the singular and plural? and not *how* or *why* it does so, is the question we should understand. It is no matter to us how *aion*, in the singular and plural, means endless, if it does in reality, in both cases signify endless, and that it does in both conditions means endless, is undeniable. This evident both from its use in the New Testament and from Parkhurst. You might as well ask me why *aion* was spelled with only four letters; or why *A* was put before *B* in the English alphabet. But I will answer your question if you will answer one of the following questions. If the word *loose*, in the English, means to untie, how could a writer use the word *unloose*? If the word *cease* signifies to stop, how could a writer use the word *surcease*? If you will answer these questions I will answer your's. The fact is, the word *aion*, both in the singular and plural evidently means endless; the words *loose* and *unloose* both mean to untie, and the words *cease* and *surcease* mean to stop. When these meanings are fixed to all these words by Lexicographers, it is sufficient for us, without being able to give reasons for all the different changes through which they pass.

I shall now consider those texts which you say do not mean endless duration though governed by the preposition *eis*. They are sixteen in number. One of them (John ix. 32,) you say in your second letter, is not governed by this preposition, but in your fifth letter you say it is governed by it. The absurdity and impossibility of its being governed and not governed at the same time is a sufficient refutation of what

you have said concerning it. Therefore only fifteen remain for consideration.

Two of these texts relate to the cursed figtree, Matt. xxi. 19; Mark. xi. 14. One affirms that no fruit shall ever grow on it, and the other that no man shall ever eat of its fruit. These you say are limited. Let me ask what are the limits of *aion* in these texts? How long is the period intended here? Do you mean to say that this figtree will bring forth figs at some future time? The most superficial reader may see that our Saviour intended, by the expression, the utmost bounds of eternity. The sense is the same, precisely as if any other words had been used that expressed eternity in the most unequivocal manner. If the wicked never enter into the heavenly blessedness till the cursed figtree bear figs and men eat them, Mr. Skinner himself would despair of their ever entering it even to the utmost limits of eternity. That the text in Luke i. 55 where it is said that God made promise to Abraham and his seed forever, must be taken in the endless sense, will be evident to any one that will turn to Gen. xvii. 19, where God said I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. The everlasting covenant here was not confined to the Jewish priesthood, but related to the covenant or scheme of man's redemption by Jesus Christ. That this is the true interpretation, will be manifest by turning to Gal. iii. 16, where we have a comment given by an inspired apostle. His words are:—"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as

of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.”—Therefore, this promise to the seed of Abraham having relation to our redemption by Jesus Christ, must be understood in the endless sense in order to avoid the absurdity of supposing that all the benefits of the gospel of Christ will come to an end so far as they relate to mankind. Three texts, John iv. 14; vi. 51, 58, relate to the effects of drinking “the water of life” and eating “the bread of life” which Christ gives to his people. Now the phrases “water of life” and “bread of life” are metaphorical expressions employed to signify the benefits conferred on mankind resulting from the atonement of Christ.—How a Universalist should say the effects of the mercy and goodness of God on the human heart are limited in their duration, I am at a loss to understand. Perhaps we are to understand that, the effects of the water and bread of life will cease, as you would have us understand of eternal life, and the soul be either annihilated or cast into endless punishment. The Saviour says those who drink of the water he shall give, shall never thirst; but you would say they shall thirst again. The bare mentioning of such an absurdity is an ample refutation of it. In one text, John x. 28, my sheep shall never perish, you say the word has a limited signification.—You might as well use plain language, and say openly, they shall perish. Who could believe that our Saviour meant that his sheep should not perish for a time, a dispensation, or an age, and after that leave them exposed to destruction? The absurdity of this also carries with it its own refutation. In John xiii. 8, Peter said, “Thou

shalt never wash my feet." To a superficial reader this might appear somewhat plausible; but when it is considered that Peter on receiving better information changed his mind, and submitted to have his feet washed, the difficulty vanishes away. When Peter declared that Christ should never wash his feet, he did not intend that the prohibition should ever cease at any future period. Hence this text, as all the others, ought to be understood in the unlimited sense. Another text on your list of limited ones is John xiv. 16, where the Saviour said the comforter should abide with his people forever. Who informed you that the spiritual gifts of heaven are limited in their duration? I cannot see for the life of me that this is anything short of giving up the doctrine of Universalism altogether. The Holy Spirit is the gift of the Deity to the redeemed, and, such only as have this gift, belong to Christ; for it is said, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." But you say, the Spirit shall not always continue with the redeemed, but only a certain period, and then depart from them. If the Spirit depart from the righteous, they then cease to be Christ's; and, if they cease to be Christ's, they must be given to the devil, or annihilated. Such is the absurdity into which you run, by forcing a limited meaning where the scope of the passage requires an endless signification. Paul said he would not eat flesh while the world standeth if it would cause his weak brother to offend, 1 Cor. viii. 13. That is, if eating flesh would injure the conscience of a weak brother, Paul would not eat flesh at

all, or at any future time to the utmost limits of eternity. The word *aion* in the phrase, "powers of the world to come" Heb. vi. 5, you suppose to be limited in signification. I cannot see how this comes to pass. The world to come must mean the future state, and not the gospel dispensation, as the gospel period in the same epistle, is called "these last days," Heb. i. 2. "A kingdom that cannot be moved," Heb. xii. 28. And as the apostle lived and wrote the epistle in the gospel period, he could not speak of it as future; therefore the world to come means the kingdom of glory. This is further manifest from the effects mentioned in the context. Consequently, the word here has an endless signification. In four texts, Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17. 21, you say the word has a limited signification where it is used to express the duration of the priesthood of Christ.—This is still more extraordinary than the former. The priesthood of Christ limited in duration! Good Heaven! Where will a man stop when he once embraces a false system?—That the priesthood of Christ is endless I prove by the following particulars:—1. His priesthood in scripture is represented as being of equal duration with his life; for it is said "he ever liveth to make intercessions for us," Heb. vii. 25; therefore, we have as much reason to believe he will die, as to believe he will cease to be a priest, intercession being an essential part of the priestly office. 2. The priesthood of Christ is said to be unchangable, or that which passeth not from one person to another, Heb. vii. 24. Therefore he must always con-

tinue to be a priest, even to endless ages. 3. He was made a priest after the power of an endless life (akatalutou.) Heb. vii. 16, If his priesthood is endless, which is undeniable from this text, I cannot see how it shall come to an end: perhaps you can inform me. I am aware that the Universalists tell the world, in their publications that the term endless is applied to the happiness of the righteous. But there is no such thing in all the word of God. The term endless occurs only in the above cited text, and it is applied to the priesthood of Christ, which you say will come to an end! 4. His priesthood is endless as to its effects. In fact, all things connected with his priestly office are endless in their nature. His life is endless; his office is not transferable, no one shall succeed him in office; and the blessed effects of his priestly office shall be endless.

As I have shown that *aion* means endless duration in every instance of the fifteen cases where you supposed it to be limited, I take it for granted that the question is settled by the preposition *eis* at last.

Your remark on John viii. 35, is a singularity of such a nature as I have never met with before. You admit the sense to be of an endless nature; but, because you suppose the same word in the Old Testament has a limited signification it must be limited here where the sense necessarily requires an endless signification. Even in Exod. xxi. 6, the word has an endless negative signification; for, the slave refusing his freedom was to be a slave for life; that is, he was never to be free. When *aion* is used to express the utmost limits of time

that the object of its application will admit of, it may, with the utmost propriety, be called endless; as the thing spoken of shall never return to its original condition.

You insinuate that I have undergone a change of mind since writing my second letter, that I then intended to settle the question by the preposition *eis*, but that failing, I had to make rules whereby it must be settled. This is all perversion. I underwent no change on the subject whatever. I then intended the preposition *eis* to settle the question concerning *aion* in the New Testament, and I am very much mistaken if I have not settled it by this rule in this letter: I intended the rules to embrace both the old and New Testament, also, eternal, everlasting and forever, and I intend so still; and I find you cannot refute any one of the rules in question; for, if you could, you would have done so. To say you "reject it with contempt" is no argument for or against any principle. If this sort of stuff were argument, we could soon settle the question. I say I "reject with contempt" the whole system of Universalism. Would you take this for a satisfactory refutation of Universalism? I suppose not.—Well. If you have refuted the rules in question, I have refuted the whole system of Universalism. Either your assertion is good for nothing, or it is good for something. If it is good for nothing, the rules I have laid down stand in full force. If it is good for something Universalism is refuted. I leave you in this dilemma to consider what side you prefer.

I am, &c.

JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER No. IX.

Baltimore, Jan. 25, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir—In charging you with perverting authorities on *aion*, I acted from a sense of duty to the cause I advocate. The exposure of such an act, was no pleasant task; but as great reliance is placed upon Lexicons, and as when fairly quoted, they sustain my views of *aion*, it was necessary that your perversion should be noticed. You now add to the aggravation of this, by calling for, one instance, to sustain my charge. I have before given Phavorinus, Grove, and Parkhurst, who say it means *man's life*, as well as eternity, men which you represented as saying, it meant *only* eternity. Now suppose an inquirer should ask me the meaning of *aion*, and I should say Phavorinus, Grove, Parkhurst, Jones, Donnegan, Hincks, Valpey, Hedericus, Schrevilius, Pickering, &c. all say it means man's life, without hinting that they say it signifies eternity, would you not call this a perversion of authorities? If so, you perverted, grossly perverted those which I have instanced. And this you now admit; for you affirm, that all the authorities which you have consulted, say, that *aion* signifies eternity, among 'other significations.' Thus do you admit my charge. This perversion will appear still greater, when it is considered, that you quoted

from these men to prove, that the etymological sense of *aion* is endless; and to give this position the slightest plausibility, you were compelled to exclude their other definitions; for a word could not be strictly endless in its meaning, and have the great variety of significations, which Lexicographers admit *aion* has. I repeat, therefore, that you grossly perverted your authorities.

While on this subject, I will expose another perversion of authority equally as glaring as the foregoing. In your quotation from Maclaine's note in Mosheim, you have given only a part; whereas, had you given the whole it would have refuted your views of *aion*. The part which you have excluded, reads thus:

"The word *aion* or *aeon* is commonly used among Greek writers, but in different senses: Its signification in the Gnostic system is not very evident, and several learned men have despaired of finding out its true meaning. *Aion* or *aeon* among the ancients was used to signify the age of man, or the duration of human life. In after times, it was employed by philosophers, to express the duration of spiritual and invisible beings."

This is the part of the note which you have seen fit to exclude from your letter, and it fully destroys the position for which you have been contending, because if the ancients used *aion* to signify the age of man, or the duration of human life, its primary signification cannot be endless. Thus are you obliged to pervert authorities and to give garbled quotations to make out your case. But even then you fail, for Mr. Maclaine's note refers to the use of *aion* among the oriental philosophers, and proves nothing positive concerning

its use in the New Testament. Further, according to the fantastic mythology of these philosophers, the word among them, could not have been used invariably in an endless sense, for some of the beings which by a metonymy they called *aeons*, were supposed to have only a limited existence.

I cannot refrain from noticing here, your departure from your own rules. In a previous letter, you complained of me, for referring to the Septuagint and to the early Christian fathers, to learn the sense of *aion*. The former, you denounced as bad Greek, and the latter as enthusiasts and fanatics; but now you think the opinions of oriental philosophers throw great light on this subject!! Now why all this twisting and turning? Why not meet the question fairly and without any garbled quotations? Does a good cause require such aid?

You say all Lexicographers give eternity as the first and primary meaning of *aion*. Such is not the fact. Donnegan, Hincks, Hedericus and Schrevilius give age or life as its first and primary meaning.

Your offer to produce twelve Lexicographers who say *aion* means endless, for every one which I will produce, who says it does not, is a pompous parade, at the expense of your cause and foreign from the question; because 1. I admit that eternity is one of its significations. 2. Every Lexicographer with which I have met has given age as one of its significations. What then if every Lexicographer in existence gave eternity as one of the senses of *aion*? It would be no argument against my views, since they all admit

that it is also limited. But every Lexicographer has not given this. Schweighauser, Valpey, Pickering and Schrevilius do not give eternity as its signification, but simply age or life. Now, dear sir, for your forty-eight, who say it means eternity! These cannot be produced, and even if they could, unless they give eternity as its only sense they would prove nothing.

There are some other things in your introductory remarks which betray a spirit that I regret to see. Take for instance, the unchristian and outrageous charge that some of my quotations from Lexicons are "mere forgeries!!" Now sir I call on you, either to sustain this insinuation or else acknowledge that you have violated the rules of honourable discussion. One of the two you are bound as a gentleman and a christian to do. This charge of forgery, together with that of personal abuse, is kindred to the false one preferred of calling Clarke a bigot. I consider them designed to make me appear in that odious and shameful light in which you are conscious that you stand—in other words, to bring me down to a level with yourself. But the enlightened reader is not to be duped in this manner; nor shall I be provoked by this, to depart from an honourable and christian course. And should you reiterate these charges, or accuse me of quibbles, evasions, miserable subterfuges, &c. I shall only hold them up to the reader's gaze, and call them by their right names. If this be personal abuse, then have I transgressed; but if simply holding these up as I have done be abuse, what shall we call making the charges? Let your conscience give the answer.

Before considering what you have said on *aion*, it may be well to sum up what I have proved respecting it in my previous letters. 1. I have proved from its roots that its etymological meaning is time indefinite, or continued existence. 2. I have proved from Lexicographers, that it is variously used, and of course, that its sense must always be determined by the connexion in which it occurs. 3. I have proved that *eis* can determine nothing respecting its meaning, because in the Septuagint and also in the New Testament, it often governs it when limited. To the first two of these, you have found it convenient to give no answer, as is the case with my arguments on many other subjects. Instead of replying to these, you have wasted your time in telling about the coincidence between your views and those expressed in the notes of the Cottage Bible, by which you were led to change your opinion and adopt my explanation of a text. Inspired with confidence by this, you go over the ground which you travelled in Letter No. 2, simply asserting that *aion* in seventy-two places means endless. Have you no argment against universalism but assertion? Where are those strong proofs, by which you have threatened to crush this monstrous heresy? After stating your positions and proving them by assertions, you gravely draw the conclusion, that the use of *aion* is an incontrovertible argument against Universalism. All this you enforce, by your usual christian and courteous flourish—"the man who can fritter this away by sophistry and critical torture, &c. Now, were I to treat this part of your letter as it deserves, I should pay no attention to your assertions respect-

ing *aion* and *eis*; but being anxious to render our discussion as instructive as possible, I will explain these texts and reply to those which you assert are so hostile to Universalism.

1. Let us consider the eleven texts where *aion* is not governed by *eis*. Of these the following are limited: Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30; John ix. 32; Acts xv. 18; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 26.—“That the word in these” six “cases is limited I have no hesitation to assert, in the most positive manner.” As these speak of a world, (*aioni*) to come, in contrast with a world (*aion*) that is past, of the beginning of the world (*aionos*), and of worlds (*aionon*), they show that *aion* is here limited. But this I have proved in letters No. 2 and 5, and to this proof you have given no reply. Besides, Dr. Clarke says, he is fully satisfied, that the phrase ‘world to come’ signifies the Christian dispensation. He is against you therefore on Mark x. 30, and Luke xviii. 30. He is also against you on John ix. 32, for he says ‘since the world began,’ means “from the commencement of time.” From his comments on Acts xv. 18, Eph. iii. 9, and Col. i. 26 it is plain that he understood *aion* there in a limited sense.

Thus have I sustained my assertion respecting these six texts, by proof, and by your own commentator. And this I suppose will be equal to your assertion.

2. I deny that *aion* in the singular, when governed by *eis* is endless in the following texts: Matt. xxi. 19; Mark xi. 14; Heb. vi. 5 Luke i. 55; John viii. 35; x. 28; 1 John ii. 17; 2 John 2; John iv. 14; vi. 51—58; xiii. 8; xiv. 16; 1 Cor. viii.

13; Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17, 21, 24, 28; 1 Pet. i. 23, 28; Mark iii. 29; 2 Pet. ii. 17; Jude 13.—Here are 25 cases to be deducted from your 31.

In letter No. 5, I referred to fifteen texts, deeming these sufficient to refute your argument drawn from *eis*; but as you have again brought it up, it becomes necessary to go more fully into this subject, and show how sadly you have wrested Scripture to give your argument support. Before proceeding to this however, I must notice your shouts of triumph at the trifling error in setting down John ix. 32. as an instance where *eis* governs *aion*. In the numerous references which are made in these letters, it would be strange if errors of this nature did not occur. Several have occurred in yours, which I have corrected, and there is one in your present letter. Your seizing therefore, with such avidity upon mine, shows how sadly you are pushed for argument, and is like a sinner, magnifying into mountains, the unintentional mistakes of the good. I will now consider the 25 texts where *eis ton aiona* occurs in which *aion* is limited.

1. Matt. xxi. 19 and Mark xi. 14. These two relate to the fig tree cursed by our Lord. To be satisfied of the limitation of *aion* in them, it is only necessary to observe, that a fig tree has, at the longest, only the brief existence of a few years; it exists in no case to the "utmost bounds of eternity." Where then was the necessity of our Lord conveying the idea, that to the "utmost bounds of eternity," the fig tree should bear no fruit? Such a declaration would have been altogether gratuitous. His language, therefore, must be interpreted by the subject upon which he was

speaking, and if this be done, he can only be considered as saying, the figtree should wither, and bear fruit no more. Your question, whether I believe the figtree will bear fruit, at some future time, is entirely irrelevant, because it is in no way necessary to say this, to show, that *aion* is here limited; for the figtree was of short existence, and *aion* was used with reference to this. Can you or any reflecting man seriously believe our Saviour taught, that to the "utmost bounds of eternity," no fruit should grow upon the tree, which he cursed? Rather than advance an idea so supremely absurd, let us admit that he used *aion* as it often occurs in Scripture and in common conversation. Thus Micah says (chap. iv, 5) we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever, (*eis ton aoina kai epekeina*, Greek, *olam va ad*, Hebrew.) So we say of man, he is ruined forever, when we simply refer to temporal misfortunes.

2. Luke i. 55. As Clarke is against you on this, it will be sufficient to give his words. The verse preceeding, he says, relates to God's covenant, and v. 55 records the fact, that this was given in one form or other to all the fathers.—And this is what he understands by speaking to Abraham and his seed forever. Observe, verse 55 does not say, he made an endless promise, but that he spoke to them forever. It is indisputably certain then, that *aion* is here limited.

3. John iv. 14; vi. 51, 58. These relate to the effects of drinking the water of life. Your attempt to make me deny the endless blessings of grace and goodness, because I said *aion* was here

limited, is another proof that you are conscious of the weakness of your cause; for if I were really in error, there would be no need of perverting my views. The grounds on which I prove endless bliss, are stated in letter No. 6. I trust therefore, you will not waste your time any longer, in repeating this hackneyed charge. My reason for saying *aion* is limited in these texts is, many who first drank of the water of life fell from grace, their love waxed cold. Consequently, the life which they had was limited. Of this there is no doubt. This fact has several times been mentioned, but you have not yet given it an answer.

4. John x. 28. Although you have said the absurdity of my position on this, carries with it its own refutation, it is precisely the opinion expressed by Clarke. Hence he says, they who continue to hear Christ's voice and follow him, shall never perish; thus showing, that if they ceased to have Christ "living and governing in their souls" they would cease to have eternal life, and of course, perish, thus making the promise conditional. As Christ was more powerful than all the united energies of men and demons, none could pluck his followers from him, but they could, as many did, fall away. And when this was done they ceased to be his sheep, and consequently forfeited his protecting care.

5. John xiii. 8. This contains Peter's declaration, that Christ should never wash his feet. *Aion* is here used as in Matt. xxi. 19 and Mark xi, 14. See our remarks on those, for a reply to yours on this. Peter could have meant only during his lifetime.

6. John xiv. 16. On this Clarke says: A

the death and atonement of Christ will be necessary to man till the conclusion of the world ; so the office of the Holy Spirit must be continued among men till the end of time : therefore, says Christ, he shall continue with you forever. What you have said on this text, about "absurdity," "annihilation" and "giving up Universalism," is entirely foreign, as the reader will see from the above quotation.

7. Cor. viii. 13. This is Paul's declaration concerning eating meat. Clarke explains it thus: Rather than give offence, "I would not only abstain from all meats offered to idols, but I would eat no flesh, should I exist through the whole course of time." I need add nothing here.

8. Heb. v. 6; vi. 20; vii. 17, 21, 24, 28. These relate to Christ's priesthood. My position on this seems to have filled you with fright. I infer this from your wild exclamations, and your still more wild positions. But I would say to you as the angel did to the shepherds, "Fear not"—truth will do you no harm.

Your four positions, might deserve a reply, were it not that Paul has expressly said, (1 Cor. xv.) that Christ shall finally deliver up the kingdom to God, by which Clarke understands his mediatorial kingdom; and which, he says, comprehends all the displays of his grace in saving sinners, and all his spiritual influence in governing the Church. In the same chapter, Paul says, Christ shall become subject to God, and that God shall be all in all, by which Clarke understands that Christ will then cease to act in the capacity of a Messiah and Mediator. Of course he will cease to be a Priest. Therefore

though Paul says Christ ever lives to make intercession, that his priesthood is unchangeable, and that Christ is a priest forever, he must not be understood, so as to clash with his testimony in 1 Cor. xv. He may live forever, but he will not make intercession after he gives up the kingdom; his priesthood was not transferrable, but he could give it up when he resigned his office as mediator, he might be made a priest forever after the power of an endless life, and still his priesthood be limited, for Clarke says this means he was immortal, and would not die, or cease through weakness, to be a priest. As to its effects, they can prove nothing with respect to the duration of the priesthood. Christ's priesthood, is not, as you have declared, said to be endless, but to be *eis ton aiona*. He was made a priest, not after the Aaronic priesthood, nor after the law of a carnal commandment, but after or according to the power of an endless life. But because this life was endless, it does by no means follow, that the life of Christ, as a priest, is also endless. Such, we have seen, is not the case; therefore Universalists believe that the Saviour's priesthood is limited, while the life and blessings which result from it are endless. And in this way they prove endless happiness from *akatalutou*. So your remark on this is a perversion of our views. Hence we may say with Paul that Christ will deliver up his kingdom to God, and God will be all in all.

The remaining instances, of *eis ton aiona* are so evidently limited that I need not illustrate them. My views on John viii. 35, you have perverted. I must therefore refer the reader to

letter No. 5 for a defence of this. Heb. vi. 5, Clarke refers to the Gospel dispensation. 2 John 2; 1 John ii. 17; 1 Pet. i. 23, 25, require no explanation.

The plural and reduplicate forms of *aion* are admitted to be generally endless in the New Testament. Luke i. 33, is an exception, and also the three texts which speak of punishment. The former cannot be endless, because Christ is to deliver up his kingdom to God; and the latter we will now prove cannot be, according to the connexion and the opinion of critics. Before doing this, however, it may be well for us to sum up what we have proved respecting *eis* and *aion*. 1. We have proved that out of the 72 times in which you say *aion* is endless, 32 of them are limited, leaving, after deducting the 6 from the 72, which relate to punishment, only 34 cases where it is endless in the whole New Testament; and thus showing that it is limited 70 times and unlimited 34 in the New Testament. I must add there are other cases where I think it limited. 2. We have proved that instead of *aion* being endless in every instance when governed by *eis*, it is limited in 23 cases. After we shall have considered the 6 which relate to punishment, we think it will be admitted to be limited in 29 cases; thus making *aion* about as often limited, when governed by *eis*, as unlimited.

It now remains to consider the 6 texts where *aion* is connected with misery. On these you differ from Stuart in his work against Universalism. He sets down only five texts, leaving out Mark iii. 29.

1. Mark iii. 29. This is the sin against the Holy Ghost, which we have explained in letters No. 3 and 6 to which the reader is referred.— We will only add: 1. That Matthew in recording this, does not use *eis*, but *en*. 2. Clarke, Wakefield and Pearce, translate *aion*, age, and refer it to this world. 3. St. Matthew says, neither in this age, neither in the age to come—that is, say the above commentators, the Jewish age and the Christian. 4. Mark says, hath not forgiveness unto the age (*eis tons aiona*) that is, unto the Christian age, but is in danger of the punishment which will be inflicted when Christ comes to destroy the Jews.

2. 2 Pet. ii. 17. "To whom is reserved the mists of darkness forever." To understand these words, let us consider, 1. That they were addressed to christians under great persecution. 2. That the apostle draws, from God's dealings with the angels that sinned, with the old world and Noah, with Sodom and Lot, an argument to encourage the christians under their sufferings. His language is, 'the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, (or trial) and to reserve the unjust unto the (or rather, according to the Greek *a*) day of judgment to be punished.' He had done thus in these cases. The day of judgment to them, was the day of their destruction. As God had done with those to whom the apostle alludes, so would he do with those he was addressing, and their enemies. Hence he says, 'the damnation of those wicked men slumbered not, and their judgment lingered not.' This agrees with his language in his first Epistle iv. 17,

“The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it first begin at us (the christians) what shall be the end?” &c. He tells their end—‘they should be destroyed as brute beasts, they should perish in their corruption.’ 4. The following chapter sustains this view of the subject. There it is said, it had been revealed, ‘that in the last days scoffers should come, asking, where is the promise of Christ’s coming?’ To understand the full import of this, we must consider, that Christ had told the disciples he should come, and reward them for their faithfulness, and punish his enemies. To this the scoffers refer. 5. Under the figure of destroying the heavens and the earth the apostle represents the judgment coming upon the Jews. This is a common figure for changes in church and state. See Isa. xiii. 9, 10; Ezc. xxiii. 7, 8; Dan. viii. 10. That this is the apostle’s meaning is evident, from his allusion to the destruction of the old world by the flood, which he thus expresses: “by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.” From this, it is plain, that by destroying the heavens and the earth, he means the great change which took place, at the close of the old dispensation. This is confirmed by the figure ‘fire’ being used, for this is a common figure, to represent the destruction of the Jews. 6. The time of this was at the coming of Christ, which was to be as a thief in the night. This is precisely the way it is represented in Matt. xxiv. which all refer to the

destruction of Jerusalem. 7. They were exhorted as in Matt. xxiv. to faithfulness with reference to this coming, because then the faithful would be rewarded, and the ungodly would fall in judgment.

From this brief review of the chapters, it is evident, that Peter was illustrating to the Christians, from the angels, the old world, Sodom, Noah, and Lot, how their enemies would be destroyed in the coming judgment and they delivered out of their trials. If so, the phrase 'mists of darkness forever' only expressed the punishment then inflicted upon the Jews, who rejected our Lord and his sacred instructions.

3. Jude 13. This was explained in Letter No. 7.

4. Rev. xiv. 11; xix. 3; xx. 10. That these texts all refer to the same time and punishment, is evident from the allusion in all three to Sodom and Gomorrah, from which are borrowed the figures "lake of fire and brimstone, and their smoke ascendeth up, &c." From their intimate connexion and agreement it is evident that the phrase "day and night" is alike applicable to all; which shows beyond dispute that they refer to a temporal punishment, a punishment where time is measured by days and nights. Hence before you again charge me with error, look well to the subject; and see that you are able to sustain your charge. Rosenmuller, Grotius, and Hammond explain these texts in accordance with Universalism.

Having already explained the texts where day and night is connected with the duration of the exercises before the throne of God, I will add nothing further. If, however, you wish for

more light on this, read Clarke, and he will set you right. As it is customary to say of people engaged in worship, they are before the throne of God, I can see no force in your argument on this.

Thus, dear sir, we see, that *aion* is limited in 70 cases out of 104, and that it is about as often limited as endless, when governed by *eis*. Universalism, therefore, can never be opposed by this word. If it is to be put down, it must be by other arguments.

My question, if "*aion* means endless, in the singular, how it could be used in the plural?" is evaded by introducing words 'unloose and untie, cease and surcease,' and by saying I might as well ask, why *aion* is spelled with four letters, or why *A* was put before *B* in the English alphabet. Now when we consider, that *aion* is used in the singular and plural, in a single and reduplicate form, for times past and future, and in connexion with things temporal and eternal, when we consider that it is composed of *aei* which signifies continually, and of *on* which signifies being, or existence, it seems impossible to resist the conclusion, that its etymological sense is continued existence; and if it be not, I see no way in which it could properly be used in these various senses. Until this argument is answered, you can raise no objection from *aion* against universalism.

As it respects your four rules, I say now, as I have before said, I admit their correctness and am willing to meet you on the ground they prescribe. All therefore, which you have said about my being unable to refute them, and my

dilemma, is fighting a man of straw. It was not your rules, but your absurd inferences which I rejected, because they took for granted the point in question. But admitting I had made the assertion you say, how would it follow, that if it was good for nothing, your rules stood in full force, but if it was good for something, Universalism was refuted. Really, this is a logic which I do not understand. Please explain.

From this examination, we discover that the doctrine of endless misery rests upon ambiguous words for support. Aion is regarded as its strongest proof, and this only signifies continued existence ; and out of 104 times, only 34, at the most, are endless. It is only six times connected with punishment, and all these have been explained by orthodox commentators in a limited sense ! Would the Allwise Creator, when his children are exposed to infinite dangers, give them no other warning of it than this ?— Why did he not speak in language which would show them the positive certainty of this endless woe ? Why did he not thunder their tremendous doom continually in their ears ? Aion only six times connected with misery !! O how unlike bible preaching is the popular preaching of this age ! And how feeble the proofs of endless woe ! The Lord is good to all, his tender mercies are over all the works of his hands.

I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. X.

BELL AIR, Feb. 8, 1835.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir—The sacred scriptures teach us that punishment shall be inflicted on the ungodly in exact proportion to the number and magnitude of their crimes. Agreeably to this sentiment we may justly conclude that the punishment of Gentiles, Jews and apostate Christians shall be variously diversified in proportion to the light and other means of improvement which they enjoyed. And not only so, but the Gentiles or Heathens themselves will be variously punished as to the degrees of punishment, as there is no doubt, as great a difference between the sin of one Heathen, and another, as there is between a Heathen and a Jew, and as great difference between the sin of one Jew, and another Jew, as there is between a Jew and a Christian; or, in other words, there may be as great a difference between a good Heathen and a bad one, as there is between a bad Heathen and a good Jew, and as much difference between a good Jew and a bad one, as there is between a bad Jew and a common sinner under the gospel. Now, if this be admitted, which I think will not be denied, it will authorise us to believe that the degrees of punishment are not degrees of time, but of severity. All these punishments may be endless, as to their duration, but variously diversified, as to the degree of the pain inflicted. The

least sin will exclude the sinner from the kingdom of heaven if he will not comply with the offer of divine mercy ; so that his sufferings may consist chiefly of privation, while egregious profligates shall suffer according to the greatness of their crimes. The point in dispute between us, is, whether these degrees of misery are equally intense and different in duration, or equal in duration and different in intensity. You contend for the former. I contend for the latter, which I expect to prove to be a doctrine of revelation, before this discussion shall be concluded.

The place of the future punishment of the wicked is called by a great number of names in the scriptures. The following twenty are submitted for your consideration:—"Wrath to come." Matt. iii. 7. "Unquenchable fire." Mark ix. 43, 44, 45. 46, 48. "Hell" Matt. v. 29. "Fire." Matt. vii. 19. "Outer darkness." Matt. viii. 12. "A furnace of fire." Matt. xv. 42, 50. "Everlasting fire." Matt. xviii. 8. "Hell fire." Matt. xviii. 9. "The greater damnation." Matt. xxiii. 14. "The damnation of hell." Matt. xxiii. 33. "The deep." Luke viii. 31. "A place of torment." Luke xvi. 28. "A prison." 1 Pet. iii. 19. "The mist of darkness." 2 Pet. ii. 17. "The blackness of darkness." Jude 13. "Bottomless pit." Rev. ix. 1 and xx. 3. "Perdition." Rev. xvii. 11. "Lake of fire and brimstone." Rev. xx. 10. "The second death." Rev. xx. 14. "Lake of fire." Rev. xx. 15.

To these twenty names of the place of future wo, I shall add *twenty-four* objections to the final salvation of all men. And,

1. St. Paul, in writing to the Gentile converts at Corinth, said, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema, Maranatha." 1 Cor. xvi. 22. These two words, which signify excommunication by our Lord at his coming, are in the Greek and Syriac languages to shew that neither Jew nor Gentile, shall be accepted. From these words it is manifest that all the Jews and Gentiles who shall neglect to love Christ, shall be excluded from the church by him at his coming to judge the world.

2. Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.) in speaking of the labour of ministers, says, 'For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.' In these words we have the final state of the righteous, and the wicked set forth in contrast; the former is saved, has life; the latter is lost, perished. These expressions cannot be legitimately understood so as to accord with the final salvation of the righteous and the wicked, but must stand in direct opposition to the doctrine of Universalism.

3. In speaking of the final state of the wicked, Paul says, 'Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.' Phil. iii. 19. If the end of a man is destruction, it certainly cannot be salvation. This is a clear case. To say this is the destruction of the body would confound the righteous with the wicked, and

make no distinction between them as the bodies of all the righteous shall be destroyed in the grave. Consequently, this passage of scripture is directly opposed to Universalism.

4. In the epistle to the Hebrews, (Heb. vi. 8.) we are informed that, 'that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.' If to be *rejected*, and to be *burned* means salvation, and the enjoyment of God in heaven, we may as well burn our bibles at once, and have done with them; as we do not know when to take a word in its literal signification, figurative meaning, or just the reverse of its common meaning, unless we have it explained by some of the oracles of the heresy of Universalism.

5. Peter in describing the dreadful state of an apostate says, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after having known it, to turn from the holy commandment, delivered unto them.' 2 Pet. ii. 20. This text shews that the final state of an apostate is worse than the beginning, and consequently stands as an insurmountable difficulty in the way of Universalism.

6. Our Lord, in speaking of the wicked conduct of Judas, said, 'But woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.' Matt. xxvi. 24. If Judas shall ever enter the kingdom of glory, and dwell in it to interminable ages, it would not be true to say, 'it had been good for him not to be born, for it certainly

will be good for all that enter heaven, that they were born. Hence, our Saviour's words concerning Judas, cannot be true, only on the condition that he shall be finally lost. This is as clear as language can make it.

7. Paul says, that 'they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.' 1 Tim. vi. 9. This destruction and perdition express the final state of the sinner, and as there can be no state after the final one, there can be no salvation after this perdition.

8. In Matt. xxv. 30, we are informed that the unprofitable servant will be cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' This text shews what will be done to the wicked, at the time their character shall be investigated by the Supreme judge, and as this is represented to us as the final state of the man we have just reason to consider it as being irreconcilable with Universalism.

9. In John xv. 6. Jesus says, 'If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.' This metaphor is evidently intended to point out the last state of the finally impenitent, and cannot be explained in accordance with final happiness, without destroying its whole force and meaning. To explain this of the destruction or burning of the body would equally destroy the force and meaning of the passage. Therefore, it must be understood of endless misery.

10. In Rom. xiv. 15. Paul says, 'destroy not

him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.' The doctrine of these words is this; a man, for whom Christ died, may be destroyed; and if destroyed, he is utterly ruined. Consequently, his salvation is inconsistent with his destruction.

11. In 1 Cor. viii. 10, 11, Paul cautions the well informed christians of Corinth, concerning the eating of meat offered to idols, and says, 'For if any man see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge, shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died?' The word perish, in this passage must mean endless misery, as it is the same that is employed in John iii. 16, where it is said, 'he that believeth on him (Christ) shall not perish, but have everlasting life.'

12. The apostle Paul says, 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine 'unto them.' The lost mentioned in this place, are those who are led away in spiritual darkness, by the god of this world; and the meaning of the word *lost*, may be seen by our Lord's use of it, in reference to Judas, where he said I have *lost* none except the son of perdition.

13. In Heb. x. 39, it is said in reference to the Hebrew converts, 'But we are not of them who draw back to perdition; but of them that believe to the salvation of the soul.' From these words

we may learn: 1. That it is possible to draw back to perdition. 2. That this perdition is the *last* state of the individual, as it is set in contrast with salvation. 3. As salvation is the final state of the believer, so destruction is the final state of the apostate. The miserable subterfuge of a temporal application of this passage, will not satisfy any enquiring mind.

14. Our Saviour asks this question; 'What is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?' The meaning of this question is this; a man that has gained all the temporal pleasures and enjoyments of this present world, at the expense of being cast to endless perdition at the day of judgment, has gained no advantage. Therefore, this passage is at variance with that doctrine which teaches that no man can lose himself, or be cast away.

15. The apostle James, in speaking of the unmerciful man, says, 'he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.' Jam. ii. 13. How judgment can be inflicted on a man without mercy, and the man be eternally saved, is rather difficult for me to comprehend. Some hypocrite of the Universalist order, perhaps, will give us an explanation of it, and prove to us that it is all mercy.

16. In the book of Proverbs (Prov. vi. 15.) it said of the wicked that his calamity shall come suddenly; and 'suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.' If he is to be destroyed or ruined without remedy, I cannot see how his salvation is to be accomplished.

17. Our blessed Saviour has said, 'Verily I

say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Matt. xviii. 3. In considering this, we may observe: 1. That no man can enter the kingdom of heaven without conversion is positively asserted. 2. Conversion is a contingent thing, depending on the fulfilment of certain conditions. Now if these conditions shall not be complied with, conversion shall not take place, and if there is no conversion there can be no admission at the gates of heaven. Hence, Universalism falls to the ground.

18. Of like import to the latter objection are those words in John iii. 3, where it is said, except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God. The remarks on the last will apply with equal force to this passage.

19. When our Saviour sent his apostles to preach the gospel, he commanded them to preach it to every creature, and added, he that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.' Mark xvi. 15, 16. In these words the final state of the believer, and unbeliever are contrasted; the one shall be saved, and the other shall be damned. Now we have no more reason to believe that the unbeliever shall enter into a different state of being after his damnation, than we have to believe that the believer shall enter into a different state of being after his salvation. Consequently, Universalism is overthrown.

20. In John iii. 36, we have the final state of the believer, and unbeliever contrasted, as in the last objection, where it said, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that be

lieth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.' If the wrath of God abideth on him it is difficult to comprehend how he is to be saved.

21. Paul says, in addressing the Corinthians, 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be not deceived, neither idolaters * * * nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.' 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Now, to say that the above characters who die in that condition, *shall* inherit the kingdom of God, is to contradict the apostle in as plain a manner as language will admit of. And to the man who can do so I have nothing to say, but shall leave it to the public to judge in the matter.

22. In the epistle to the Galatians, the apostle enumerates a number of crimes, and then, says that 'they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' Gal. v. 21. See also Eph. v. 5. If those sinners who habitually commit such crimes as the apostle mentioned, should ever enter the kingdom of heaven, his declaration must be false; for, he has declared clearly and distinctly that they shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven. This is affirmed without relation to any given period of time.

23. In Rom. vi. 22, the *end* of the righteous is said to be *everlasting life*. But in Phil. iii. 19, the *end* of the wicked is said to be *destruction*. On these texts it may be remarked that, the final state of the righteous and the wicked is called the *end*. Now as there is no state of existence after the end of a man, and

as the end of the one is everlasting life, and the end of the other destruction; the downfall of Universalism follows.

24. The following passages of scripture express the final states of men, and if final, then there is no possibility of another state succeeding it. Prov. iii. 35; x. 28; xi. 6, 9; xiv. 32; Dan xii. 2; Matt. iii. 12; vii. 13, 14; xiii. 30; John iii. 16; Rom. ix. 20—23; 2 Tim. ii. 20; Gal. vi. 7, 8.—That the above texts do speak of the final state of men is obvious; 1. The state of the righteous is allowed to be final, but the state of the wicked is all along put in contrast as to happiness. 2. These texts are totally silent as to any other state following that of destruction, damnation, &c. 3. The language of the greater part of them is inconsistent with any other state to follow.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel.

JOSEPH M'KEE.

LETTER No. X.

Baltimore, Feb. 10, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir—The receipt of your present letter has afforded me the highest satisfaction.—It is free, almost entirely free, from all personal remarks and uncharitable allusions to the doctrine and denomination which you oppose. This is as it should be; for nothing can be more improper, than bitter, personal invective, when discussing that religion which is emphatically called, the 'gospel of peace;' and nothing has given me more pain, than the necessity of noticing the personal charges

which you have dealt out in such great profusion. I now hope for better things.

That the scriptures teach that the ungodly shall be punished in proportion to their moral delinquency; and that there are the various grades of characters which you state is readily conceded, and of course, that there are various degrees of punishment. This is the very doctrine for which Universalists have always contended; and which their opposers have uniformly denied. We have been told, that sin is infinite, because against an infinite God, the violation of an infinite law, that it could not be forgiven without an infinite atonement, and that it deserved an infinite punishment, all of which it appears you reject. But in throwing aside these absurdities, you have been compelled to adopt one equally as great, viz. "that the degrees of punishment are not degrees of time, but of severity." By what course of reasoning, such a conclusion could be sustained, I am unable to conceive. 1. It could not be on the ground of justice; for there would be no proportion between an endless pain, and the sin of a few moments. Could you say, with the Rev. Wilbur Fisk, and Methodists in general, that the turpitude of an act is measured by the dignity of the being offended, you would, if able to sustain this, show the justice of endless wo. But since you measure sin by the light and knowledge of the sinner, I regard it as utterly impossible to show the justice of interminable punishment. 2. It could not be on the ground of utility; for as God does not afflict willingly, it could be no satisfaction to him, and as saints would be safely lodged in heaven, it could not be necessary to their virtue. 3. It

could not be on the principle of revenge or retaliation, as you say future punishment is; for this would be rousing the Governor of heaven to endless anger, for the sin of a moment. Not only so, God is immutable, and cannot be angry in the sense you say.

Besides, why should the Deity, who wills the salvation of all men, whose nature is love, and who sent his Son to save the world, perpetuate punishment eternally, when it destroys his purpose, and prevents the accomplishment of his will? Paul differs with you entirely on this subject. He declares that God chastens for our profit, not like some earthly fathers for his pleasure; and as there is no profit in endless punishment, it must be limited in time, as well as various in degree. Hence God says, he will not contend forever, Isa. l. 16; that tears shall be wiped from all faces, Isa. xxv. 8; and that death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed, 1 Cor. 15. Punishment, therefore, is, beyond all doubt, limited in duration.

As it respects your 20 names of the place of future wo, I will only observe, that assertion will not, in this discussion, be admitted as argument. First prove that these twenty texts relate to the future world, before you talk of the names by which you suppose hell is designated. I will only add, several of these texts I have in this discussion proved, relate to this world, and the rest have been so explained by Pearce, Clarke, Hammond, Lightfoot, Kenrick, Cappe, Gilpin, &c.—Thus do you contradict in your explanations, not only Clarke, but all distinguished commentators. I deny, sir, that a single text out of your twenty, has reference to the future world; and until you

prove that they have, they must go for what your assertion is worth.

I will now proceed to an examination of the twenty-four passages which you have brought against Universalism.

1. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. On this Clarke says: "Does not the apostle refer to the last verse in the Bible? 'Lest I come and smite the land with a curse.' And does he not intimate that the Lord was coming to smite the Jewish land with that curse, which took place a very few years after, and continues on that gainsaying and rebellious people to the present day? What the apostle has said was prophetic, and indicative of what was about to happen to that people. God was then coming to inflict punishment upon them. He came and they were broken and dispersed."—*Note in loc.*

Hammond, Pyle, Wakefield and Rossenmuller, refer it simply to casting out of the Church. As it respects your definition of Maranatha, it is entirely unfounded. Parkhurst says, it means simply, "cursed art thou." Shall I take all these authorities, or your word?

2. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. "We are unto God a sweet savour," &c. Here you assume that *saved* signifies endless happiness, and *perish* endless death. But the apostle says, "in them that *are* saved." The fact is, from the Roman custom of giving "grand triumphs" to those generals who obtained great victories, the apostle drew a figure to illustrate the effects of preaching. At these triumphs, the odor of the incense and smoke of the sacrifices, filled the whole city. And as these were a savour of life, to the conquerors, so they

were a savour of death to the conquered. Thus it was with the Gospel; to the believer it was the savour of life, to the unbeliever of death. But as life and death are common terms to express the moral condition of saints and sinners on earth, the text proves nothing respecting the future state. "We know that we have passed from death unto life." "Dead in sin." "He that believeth hath life." This explanation is confirmed by Horne, Gilpin and Hammond. The latter says:—"For by our preaching the gospel, we perform a very acceptable service to God, and bring in glory to his name, offer up a sweet smelling sacrifice unto him among all sorts of people, both among the penitent believers which receive the faith, and live according to it, and the impenitent unbelievers that receive it not. For though this sweet perfume, to the obstinate impenitent hath been the most perfect poison, (as high perfumes sometimes are,) they have grown the worse for the gospel's coming among them; yet to all that have forsaken their old courses of sin, and obeyed this call to a new life, it hath been the most comfortable vital savour that ever came to them."

3. Phil. iii. 19. "Whose end is destruction." Pyle explains this as follows:—"Their notions and views of religion are all temporal, and their chief aim is at the gratification of their sensual appetites and pleasures; they boast in what they ought to be ashamed of; and, for such irreclaimable prejudices and practices, God will destroy their whole nation with a most exemplary destruction." *Par. in loc.* Whitby is of the same opinion.

Your argument, that destruction cannot mean temporal death, because the good also die, stands opposed to two facts. 1. The god of these people was their belly—that is, they were sensual, and devoted to the gratification of their appetites and passions. And are not such people now destroyed? Alas! See the thousands hurrying to an untimely grave. 2. Temporal destruction is often threatened as a punishment. This none will deny. And is it not a punishment, a sore punishment? So it was regarded under the old dispensation, and so it is now regarded. The fact that the good must also die, does not affect this in the least, because to die, as a punishment, and a natural death, are two things quite different.—Your argument, therefore, is fallacious; for the end of these people was temporal destruction.—The apostle speaks of their temporal, not their eternal end.

4. Heb. vi. 8. “Is nigh unto cursing.” On this Dr. Clarke says:—“It is acknowledged, almost on all hands, that this epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.—This verse is, in my opinion, a proof of it; and here I suppose the apostle refers to that approaching destruction, and perhaps he has this all along in view, but speaks of it covertly, that he might not give offence.”

He then adds, ‘there is a good sense in which all these things may be applied to the Jews at large;’ and after showing this application he says, ‘the Jewish nation was then nigh unto cursing, about to be cut off from the divine protection, and their city and temple were about to be burnt up by the Roman armies.’ Thus sir, the text agrees with

Universalism even though 'rejected' and 'burned,' do not mean saved; for there are rejections and burnings, besides endless wo. Had you nothing but such a turn to give in justification of your view of this text? This is all you have given! Oh how weak is error! how feeble all the arguments by which it is supported!

5. 2 Pet. ii. 20. "The latter end is worse with them than the beginning." As Peter was speaking of apostates, and showing that their character after apostacy, was worse than before, I need offer nothing on this text. By their latter end, he means, as the context shows, not their final state, but their state as apostates. So says Kenrick.

6. Matt. xxvi. 24. Judas. According to your application of this text, there are two startling and awful facts: 1. That Judas was born and raised up to betray Christ, and for fulfilling the purpose of God in this, was sent to an endless hell. If this be not reprobation with a vengeance, then I know not what is. Say no more, Sir, against Calvinism, while you argue for such a doctrine. 2. That the endless ruin of one man was essential to the salvation of others. "Offences *must* needs come, but wo unto that man by whom they come."

Now, sir, rather than adopt two such awful conclusions, I would say, that our Lord used a proverbial expression, common among the Jews, when any great calamity was about to fall on an individual. Expressions of this nature were frequent. Hence they said of people who surmounted great difficulties or performed great things, they had removed a mountain; and from this Paul borrowed his figure in 2 Cor. xiii. 2, and

the Saviour in Matt. xxi. 21. So Jeremiah and Job curse the day of their birth, and declared that they had better never been born; not from the fear of endless woe however, but in consequence of the trifling ills of life; and Solomon says, that an untimely birth is better than to be the father of many children, and live an hundred years, if they are years of misery. Here we see, that Solomon, Job, and Jeremiah used the same language, as that used by the Saviour, and in reference to temporal evils. Is it not evident that Jesus spake in the same sense with them, meaning, that some awful calamity was to fall upon Judas?

On this Clarke says: "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born!" I have considered this saying in a general point of view, in my note on Matt. xxvi. 24, and were it not a proverbial form of speech, among the Jews, to express the state of any flagrant transgressor, I should be led to apply it, in all its literal import, to the case of Judas, as I have done in the above note to the case of any damned soul; but when I find it was a proverbial saying, and that it has been used in many cases where the fixing of the irreversible doom of a sinner is not implied, it may be capable of a more favourable interpretation than what is generally given to it." He also adds:—"The utmost that can be said of the case of Judas is this: he committed a heinous act of sin and ingratitude, but he repented and did what he could to undo his wicked act; he had committed the sin unto death, i. e., a sin that involves the death of the body; but who can say, (if mercy was offered to Christ's murderers, and the gospel

was first to be preached at Jerusalem, that these very murderers might have the first offer of salvation through him whom they had pierced,) that the same mercy could not be extended to wretched Judas? I contend that the chief priests, &c., who instigated Judas to deliver up his Master, and who crucified him, and who crucified him too as a malefactor, having at the same time the most indubitable evidence of his innocence, were worse men than Judas Iscariot himself; and that if mercy was extended to those, the wretched, penitent traitor did not die out of the yearning of his bowels. And I contend farther, that there is no evidence of the final damnation of Judas in the sacred text." *Note in fin. Acts, chap. i.*

7. 1 Tim. vi. 7. The remarks under our third head are equally applicable to this; and if they were not, I see no reason for answering so many assumptions. You have assumed that the destruction in the text means endless wo. Have you any proof of this?

8. Matt. xxv. 30. See this explained in letter No. vii., 8th head.

9. John xv. 6. "Cast them into the fire, and they are burned." On this text you make several assertions, but as they are backed up by no proof, they must go for assertions, not for arguments.—Under the figure of the vine and its branches, Christ represents himself and disciples; the cutting off and burning the branches, he uses as a figure of cutting off and destroying unfaithful christians. We have frequently shown in this discussion how apostates were destroyed, and that fire was a common figure to represent the destruction. Such, we believe, is the case here,

At any rate, nothing is said of another world.—Your assertion, therefore, is unfounded.

10. Rom. xiv. 15. "Destroy not him with thy meat," &c. Here you assume that destroy means endless punishment, but as there are so many destructions mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, proof is requisite to sustain your assumption. The words, it seems, were spoken, in consequence of a division respecting the use of meat; some being for and some against it. The word destroy is used to express the effect which eating meat might have on those who considered it wrong; and is synonymous with stumble and fall, (v. 13.) with 'offended' and 'made weak' (v. 21.) He that can discover the doctrine of endless wo in any of these words, must have a remarkably penetrating mind. They certainly say nothing of another world, but simply relate to some being offended, because others ate what they considered unclean and forbidden of God.

11. 1 Cor. viii. 10, 11. 'Perish.' This word is used in a variety of senses; but the most frequent is *death*. As the apostle is here discussing the same subject as in Rom. xiv. 15, and as he uses the same figures, we will only add in the language of Gill: "The perishing of this weak brother is to be understood of his peace and comfort, and is explained by defiling his conscience, ver. 7, by wounding it, ver. 12, and making him to offend, v. 13, through an imprudent use of christian liberty in those who had the greater knowledge, and by a participation of things offered unto idols in an idol's temple, and not of his eternal damnation in hell, which could never enter into the apostle's thought, as to be brought about hereby, as appears from ver. 8," &c. *Expos. in loc.*

12. 2 Cor. iv. 3. "Hid to them that are lost." The only thing on which you rely here is the word lost. Now as Christ came to seek and save the lost, and as the prodigal son was lost and found again, no argument can be drawn from this word against Universalism. The meaning of the text is thus expressed by Pyle: "Nor can what I have preached and written to you be denied to be the sincere gospel truth, unless by such sensual and profligate men, whose affections are so wedded to their temporal ends and advantages, that they have no relish of the wise and glorious purposes of the religion of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the image of the Father, and the revealer of his true and last will to mankind."—*Par. in loc.*

13. Heb. x. 39. "Draw back to perdition."—As though not satisfied with the arguments, by which you sustain your application of this text, you must cry out, in relation to our views of it, 'miserable subterfuge.' O when will men learn to be candid and charitable! That this means temporal destruction, at the siege of Jerusalem, is evident, 1. Because the Christians were then suffering great persecution and many in consequence were slinking away from Christ and his cause. Of these, the apostle says, "We are not." 2. In verse 27 it is said "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come," &c. which Clarke refers to Christ's coming to execute judgment upon the Jews. 3. They had need of patience because they could not receive the promise until Christ's coming. Hence they had need of patience to endure their trials. 4. "To the saving of the soul," Clarke explains, to the "preservation of the life," thus showing that both the sal-

vation and perdition were temporal. Your three arguments therefore have no foundation.

14. Matt. xvi. 26. "Lose his soul." On this Clarke says: "By what authority our translators rendered *psuche*, soul, I know not; for it is the same word which, in the verse preceding, is twice rendered life." That it simply means animal life is evident from the situation of the christians. They were in a state of great persecution, from which they were to be delivered at Christ's coming. At this time the persecutors were to be destroyed. Hence the declaration, if they sought to save their lives, that is, if they renounced Christ for safety, they should lose their lives. But if they would lose, or live as though they would lose their lives, that is, give up all for Christ, they should save them. These words proved true, for not a single christian suffered in the siege of Jerusalem. To render this the more impressive, Christ adds, "What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, (life) or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (life.)" This explanation is unquestionable, because the text refers to Christ's second coming. Hence the verse following (27) says, the Son of man shall come before that generation shall pass away. Your paraphrase therefore is fallacious. That a person who reads Greek should refer this text to the future world, seems incredible! Why sir, you are a century behind the age, and a dozen, I was about to say, behind Clarke.

15. James ii. 13. "Judgment without mercy." To show your entire misrepresentation of this text, it is only necessary to observe 1. That the

epistle of James was addressed to the twelve tribes, which were "scattered abroad"—that is, the twelve tribes of the Jews. 2. The epistle is chiefly occupied to the commencement of the fifth chapter, in giving advice to the brethren scattered abroad, in instructing them how to conduct themselves under their trials, in encouraging them to persevere, and in assuring them of their reward. 3. The fifth chapter begins by denouncing in prophetic style, judgments upon the rich, those who had defrauded the labourer, and killed the just; which judgment Clarke refers, to the destruction of Jerusalem. And that he is right is evident from the declaration, "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." Thus sir, the judgment without mercy is seen, not to be endless wo, but that awful calamity which came upon the Jews, at the destruction of their city. The circumstances and facts we have noticed, place this beyond dispute. Your sneer, therefore, and assertion that Universalists will make the judgment all mercy, is quite foreign from the truth.

16. Prov. vi. 15. "Broken without remedy." As this breaking is called a sudden calamity, I should think it an insult to the reader to offer any argument to show that it signified any more than cutting off from the earth, if even this. A man guilty of the vices mentioned here, is suddenly broken; and he is rendered so odious and contemptible in the eyes of the people, that there is no restoring him to his former standing. He is broken without remedy. This is especially the case with a man who has shed innocent blood, (v. 20) he can have no mitigation of his punishment; for his case there is no remedy.

17. Matt. xviii. 3. As the kingdom of heaven—here means the gospel kingdom on earth, according to nearly all commentators, this can prove nothing concerning the future world. Besides, if it referred to the kingdom above, it would be no argument against Universalism; for the Psalmist says, (Psal. 22, 27) all the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; Isaiah (xlv. 23,) every knee shall bow and tongue confess that in the Lord they have righteousness and strength; the Saviour that he will draw all men unto him, (John xii. 32.) St. Paul, that God shall gather together all things in heaven and on earth, (Eph. i. 10;) and the Revelator (Rev. v. 13.) that every creature in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and in the sea, and all that in them are, shall sing the song of redeeming grace. Reformation, therefore, will be universal.

18. John iii. 3. This is answered under the above head.

19. Mark xvi. 15, 16. "He that believeth not shall be damned." The word damned is no proof of endless wo, because it is synonymous with condemned. "He that believeth not is condemned already." It simply, therefore, expresses the consequence of unbelief, without any regard to its duration. So with the word saved; it is synonymous with life, peace, rest, joy. Thus, he that believeth hath life. The text then, simply expresses the effects of receiving and of refusing the gospel, and has not the remotest reference to man's final state. Should it be said the tense, shall be damned, disproves this, I answer, the preaching of the gospel was future; and the future tense was of necessity used. Go ye and

preach, he that believes, &c. Hence *when* the Gospel was preached, *then* would be the life or salvation, and *then* the condemnation. The text therefore decides *what* future time was intended. When speaking of preaching and believing in the present tense, the present tense is used in expressing their effects. 'Thus, 'he that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.' The same tense is used in expressing the effect of unbelief. 'This *is* the condemnation.' The wrath of God *abideth* on the unbeliever. All these passages are of the same import; and they teach, as we see, not the final condition of men, but that to have the life of Christ, we must believe; and that condemnation and wo are upon all unbelievers.—Hence he that believeth not, shall not see life—that is, no man can see life in unbelief. Faith is the medium through which spiritual life enters the soul. That I am right, is evident, because many who first heard the Gospel and believed, afterwards fell back. Their salvation then was limited. While on the other hand, many who first rejected it, afterwards believed. Their condemnation then was limited. Besides, if we say the damnation and salvation express the final condition of mankind, we must say first, that all will be lost, who are not baptized, for the text makes this essential; second, we must say, that the heathen will be lost, for they do not believe. Are you prepared, Sir, to adopt such awful conclusions? If so, give us something besides assertion for their support. This is all you have given to prove your application of this text.

20. John iii. 36 is answered under the above head.

21. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10 teaches not the impossibility of idolitars, &c. being regenerated, but the impossibility of their entering the kingdom without regeneration. "Know ye not that the unrighteous, &c. shall not inherit the kingdom?" He then adds: "And such were some of you; but now ye are washed," &c. Having been washed, they had entered the kingdom. Paul therefore, explains this subject satisfactorily and plainly.

22. Gal. v. 21 is the same as the above.

23. Rom. vi. 22. As I have explained the text which you quote (Phil. iii. 19,) in connexion with this, I need add nothing here, only to observe, that it remains to be proved, that the end of which the apostle was speaking in Rom. vi. 22, was endless life; and also if it were, that this is an argument in favour of your inference. The end of a man in the Bible, usually signifies his death. Why not give us direct testimony to sustain your doctrine, and not rest it on inference? At least, do not take for granted the premises, from which your inferences are drawn.

24. Under this head, you say, "The following passages express the final state of man; and if final," &c. Now as several of these have already been explained; and as you have given no answer to these explanations, I will not waste time in replying to texts thus assumed. Besides several commentators differ with you on these texts; not only so, some as you apply them, teach old fashioned Calvinism. I deny that the texts refer to man's final state; and as all your inferences rest on the assumed position that they do, your argument falls to the ground.

Thus Sir, as in letter No. vii. I have replied to

assumption after assumption. And if you are disposed to continue the controversy in this way, I shall not object, for my task is easy, and the reader cannot fail of seeing the sandy foundation on which your partial system is built.

I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. XI.

BELL AIR, Feb. 14, 1835.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir—On a careful review of your *sixth* letter, I find several particulars that require some critical remarks.

Your criticism on *olam* is not only irrelevant but erroneous and absurd. The following are your own words: ‘You admit that *olam* in Daniel is the same as *aionios* in Matth. (though you denied this in letter, No. 1.) It is morally certain then, that both refer to the same event—‘the destruction of Jerusalem.’” To this, I reply, 1. I did not at any time admit that *olam* in Dan. is the same as *aionios* in Matth. I said that *olam* in the Heb. of Dan. was rendered *aionios*, by the translators of the Septuagint. I deny that the *seventy* were inspired men, and always gave the true sense of the Hebrew in their translation. I deny that *olam* and *aionios* are, in all cases, synonymous. 3. Parkhurst says *olam* signifies ‘time indefinite, unknown, or concealed from man, and is used in the Old Testament, both in a limited and unlimited

sense;' while aionios is never used, in the New Testament, in a limited sense, except in two places (2 Tim. i. 9; Tit. i. 2.) which are violently disputed. 2. I did not say one syllable concerning olam, in my first letter, as any one may see, by a reference to that letter. Therefore, your saying, I denied any thing about olam, in my first letter, is a forgery, or false quotation. And if this is done with my own letters, before my face, what must I think of the quotations from unknown authors, where no reference to their works is given? It is a painful task for me to touch this subject. I do it unwillingly, I am compelled to notice it, and I perceive that I have not done with it. However, I shall not deal in naked assertions, but shall demonstrate facts. 3. Your inferences drawn from olam are erroneous in consequence of the premises being unsound.

You say that 'the meaning of aionios must be determined by the noun to which it is applied, and the circumstances under which it is used.' This, to say the least, is absurd and contrary to the construction and the rules of language. I was taught, in my youth, to believe that the adjective qualified the noun, and defined its meaning; and not that the noun prescribed or defined the signification of the adjective. But in order to get along with your system you are obliged to run into the absurdity of inverting the established order of language. This will be sufficiently evident to every discerning reader, and duly estimated.

Your various definitions of aionios are mere assumptions, without any authority from lexi-

cographers, or from reason, invented, as I believe, to make the best of a bad cause, and render it somewhat plausible.

You say, 'zoen aionion' signifies the life of faith * * * is synonymous with life, entering Christ's kingdom, having rest, peace, joy and love.' You say, the phrase everlasting life does not mean endless life, because the believer of to day may be the infidel of to-morrow.' I deny that the believer of to day may be the infidel of to morrow. Believers are component parts of Christ's kingdom, as you have admitted; and, as his kingdom, in the aggregate, is indestructible, it must be so in its parts; for, whatever can be affirmed of a whole, can be affirmed, with equal truth and certainty, of all the constituent parts. Besides all this, Paul said (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) 'For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' But you say, we may be separated from the love of God. I leave the reader to judge, whether I am to believe the doctrine of an inspired apostle, or the erroneous interpretation of scripture which you have adopted to support a false system.

You say eternal life is used to express the reward of the primitive christians, after the destruction of Jerusalem. This also is mere assumption. It is as much the reward of all other christians as it is that of the primitive christians, as the endless happiness of heaven is

frequently called a reward (Col. iii 24; Heb. xi. 26; Rev. xxii. 12.) by the inspired writers, though, in strict propriety no good thing can be a reward, but must be a free gift, as no man can merit any good thing at the hand of God.

You refer me to certain texts where, you say eternal life means endless life. By your method of treating this subject, one man may have at least *three* everlasting lives, i. e. 'the life of faith,' 'the reward of the primitive christians' and 'endless life,' I might, on this plan, prove that one man might have *fifty* everlasting lives. The absurdity of these sentiments is a sufficient antidote to their baneful effects.

Your quotation from Clarke is a perversion of his views. He intended to refute the doctrine of reprobation as held by the predestinarians, and not to defend Universalism by the words which you have cited.

You have, perhaps taken the easiest way of passing the unanswerable argument deducible from Dan. xii. 2. I deny that our Lord ever applied these words to the destruction of Jerusalem, or that he, or any writer of the New Testament, ever quoted them under any circumstance whatever.

I find you have turned predestinarian on my hand. You say, 'you cannot admit that ordained to life, means disposed to life, because, ordained (*tetagmenoi*) is from a Hebrew word, which signifies to place, to sit, to appoint.' I do not admit myself that the English word 'ordained' means 'disposed;' but I do say that the Greek word *tetagmenoi* does mean 'disposed,' 'adapted' to eternal life, and not fore-ordained

or predestinated to life, and in this I am fully sustained by Parkhurst. You say 'other texts speak of fore-ordination to life. See Eph. i. 4, 5, 11; ii. 10; Rom. viii. 29, 30.' Now, if you believe in the doctrine of the fore-ordination of some to everlasting life, (for those texts speak only of a part) the rest must be reprobated to everlasting misery. How these sentiments can be reconciled with the doctrine of Universalism is for you to explain.

I perceive you have made another pitiful attempt to explain away the endless signification of *aionios* in Mark. iii. 29. Now, I can prove by your own rule of interpretation that *aionios*, in this passage means endless. The account of the unpardonable sin, as it is called, is recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In Matth. xii. 31, we are told in the most unequivocal manner that the sin against the Holy Ghost shall *not* be forgiven. This is spoken in contrast with the sin against the son of man, which *shall* be forgiven. This negative form of speech shews incontrovertibly, that there is no forgiveness for this sin, at any future period whatever; for, if it shall be forgiven at any period included in the unlimited bounds of eternity, it would not be true, to say it shall *not* be forgiven. Now, if *aionios* be explained agreeably to the sense of the passage, it must mean unlimited duration. The same argument may be drawn from Luke xii. 10, if it were necessary, where the two sins are contrasted with each other. It is said of the sin against the Son of man, that it *shall* be forgiven, and of the sin against the Holy Ghost, that it shall *not* be forgiven. To say

that both shall be forgiven, would be to overturn and destroy the use and propriety of language, and turn the whole scriptures into one mass of confusion. But such are the absurdities into which the Universalists are driven, in order to render plausible an erroneous system.

Your answers to my six questions, I consider to be nothing but mere evasions. To my question concerning the duration of future misery, you answer, 'that you pretend not to be wise above what is written.' What is written concerning its limitation? Its duration is expressed by the same word whereby the duration of the happiness of the righteous is expressed; and, not one word can be found in all the Holy Scriptures which goes to say, in clear terms, that either the one or the other shall ever come to an end! To the second question, how can you prove that misery is not endless, you answer 'by showing that there is no proof of endless misery.' I deny that this would afford any proof that misery is not endless, inasmuch as it would prove nothing on the subject. You can not prove that there are any inhabitants in the moon; but, this is not proof that she is uninhabited; for, the thing remains undetermined. So it is with respect to the proof of future misery, should I fail to demonstrate (which will be seen to be far otherwise) the eternity of hell's torments, the failure in evidence to support the doctrine would be no proof that the contrary doctrine is true; for it would only leave the thing undetermined. To my third question, what influence the atonement of Christ will have on the condition of the damned, you

say by way of answer, that it shall be the same as in this life. That the atonement will have any good effect on the damned, in a future state, is unknown to us, as it has no support from Revelation. I cannot regard such a sentiment in any other light than as a human invention to support a bad cause. To my third and fourth question you answer, you reject the common doctrine of the devil, and of course his salvation. The word *diabolos* in the plural form occurs only *three* times in the New Testament, where it is applied metaphorically to human beings. 1 Tim. iii. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 3; Tit. ii. 3. In the singular, the word generally means the arch apostate, the chief enemy of God and man, the devil. In this application of it, the article is generally added. Possessions are never attributed to the being termed *ho diabolos*. He is always spoken of as only one; and other beings, however bad, are never confounded with him. He is termed 'the devil,' 'the evil one,' 'the tempter' 'the adversary,' 'the dragon,' 'the serpent,' 'the prince of this world,' 'prince of the power of the air,' 'god of this world.' To my sixth question, is Christ, as to his divine nature, truly and really God? You say, I believe Christ is the Son of God. Now this is manifest evasion. The phrase Son of God is extremely ambiguous, inasmuch as it is applied to a variety of beings. Adam is called the son of God. Angels are called sons of God. Believers in Christ are called sons of God. Jesus, as to his human nature, is called the Son of God, the only begotten Son of God, God's beloved Son, and the Son of Man.

And all this without relation to his divine nature. That Jesus Christ is both God and man is manifest from all those scriptures which relate to him. There is one class of scriptures which describe him as a servant, and inferior to the Father. Now all these may be fairly understood in relation to his human nature, and his office as mediator. But there is another class of scriptures which represent him as equal in all respects to the Father, which may be fairly understood in reference to his divine nature. In this latter class of scriptures, all the incommunicable names of the infinite Jehovah are ascribed to him. All the incommunicable perfections of the Supreme Being are ascribed to Christ. The work of creation is ascribed to our blessed Savior. Divine worship by angels and men, in earth and heaven, must be given to Christ, and has been given to him. Therefore, he is truly and properly God; or, all the inhabitants of heaven are idolaters. When these arguments are summed up, they will prove incontestibly that the Redeemer of mankind is God, in opposition to the Universalists, who 'deny the Lord that brought them' by saying he is not the true God.

I shall now proceed to consider your positive proofs of the final salvation of all men.

You say, 'to give endless life to all, would be the highest glory of God, and cause grace to reign as universally, unto eternal life, as sin had reigned unto death.' In these words I find nothing but your opinion of the matter, which is no proof of any thing. Another man might be of a very different opinion from you, regarding

this subject. It is not your opinion, nor the opinion of any man I want; but I want truth.

You say, 'If all had not endless life in him, disbelieving the word would not make God a liar, for the word would be false.' This is an absurd conclusion; for eternal life is suspended on the condition of faith, as is manifest from our Lord's words in Mark, 'he that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned' You say, this life exists independently of faith.' Where did you gain this information? Certainly not in the scriptures, for they teach the contrary doctrine.

After saying several things concerning Christ, which have no direct bearing on the subject at issue, you say, 'Add to all this, those words, strictly endless, which are used to express the result of his mission, words never applied to sin or misery, and the eternity of life is placed beyond dispute.' When you shall have the goodness to tell me what these words are, which you say are 'strictly endless' or where I may find them, I might say something concerning them. But till you do this, I must be silent. The word *akataluton* is no proof of the endless happiness of the saints, much less does it prove the salvation of all men. According to Parkhurst the word is derived from *a* negative, and *katalutos*, dissolved, and signifies indissoluble, or not to be dissolved. This word occurs only *once* in the New Testament, in Heb. vii. 16, and relates to the priesthood of Christ, where he is said to have been made a priest after the power of an endless life. This word can no more prove the endless happiness of man-

kind than the omnipresence and omnipotence of Christ can prove the omnipresence and omnipotence of mankind.

The phrase, 'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.' Cor. xv. 22, has been very often misapplied by those who quote it without considering its connexion in the chapter. The apostle's object in the xvth chapter was to prove to the Corinthians the resurrection of the dead, a doctrine which some of them denied. And this being the subject of Paul's reasoning in this connexion, it is evident to the most superficial reader that the dying in Adam, and the being made alive in Christ must mean the death and resurrection of the body. The words may be thus paraphrased; as by the sin of Adam all his posterity became mortal, and subject to temporal death, so by the death of Christ all men, both good and bad, shall be raised from their graves at the last day, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting condemnation.

That all shall be raised at the last day, is manifest; and that they shall be immortal, that is, not subject to the death of the body, any more is also manifest; but, that all mankind shall have endless happiness, is not manifest. Immortality and eternal life are two words coupled together in Rom. ii. 7, the former signifying the endless existence of the soul, and the latter signifying endless happiness.

All that shall be counted worthy to obtain the state of the blessed in heaven shall be like unto the angels; that is they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage; but they shall enjoy

a happy immortality. Our Lord spake of the church exclusively, as is evident from the phrase 'those that shall be counted worthy,' &c. Consequently, this text does not furnish us with the least shadow of proof of the final salvation of all men.

After applying to the resurrection state a passage in Isai. xxv. which relates to the church on earth, and saying that ignorance, death, tears, rebuke, &c. shall be unknown, you wind up the whole concern by saying, 'what is here proved of one man, is proved of the **WHOLE WORLD.**' This conclusion is erroneous. In order that such a conclusion should be sound, it would be necessary that all the world should be included in the one man you mention. Your conclusion is altogether illogical; for according to your mode of reasoning, whatever can be affirmed of a small part may be affirmed of the whole. To test this principle let us try it in another way. I could prove that one man has three thumbs; but, would you consider it good logic, were I to say what I have proved of this one man, I have proved of the whole world? I could prove that one man is six feet, four inches high; but would you think me correct were I to say this was proved of all men? You have proved that some men shall rise, at the last day to everlasting life; but this no more proves that all men shall rise in that condition, than I have proved that all men have three thumbs each, and are six feet four inches high. Whatever can be affirmed of the whole, may be affirmed of each of its parts, because each part is included in the whole. But what may be affirmed

of a part may not be affirmed of the whole, because the whole is not included in a part. Consequently, you will have to find some other proof for the salvation of all men, besides the proofs of the salvation of a few.

I have already observed, that by rejecting *aionios* as signifying endless life, you left the christian no proof of the endless duration of the saints' happiness.

The adjective *aphthartos* is variously translated in the New Testament, as, incorruptible, immortal, and occurs only *six* times. It is derived from *a* negative, and *phthartos* corruptible, and signifies incorruptible. It is *twice* applied to the Divine nature of God, Rom. i. 23; 1 Tim. i. 17; *once* to the resurrection body, 1 Cor. xv. 52; *once* to the saint's inheritance. 1 Pet. i. 4; *once* to the word of God, (1 Pet. i. 23.) to which when *aion* is applied, it does not mean endless duration, according to your last letter; and *once* to the saint's crown of glory, 1 Cor. ix. 25. There is no use made of this adjective whereby it proves the endless happiness of one single man.

The noun *athanasia* is derived from *a* negative, and *thanatos* death, and signifies immortality. This word occurs only *three* times in the New Testament, and is *once* applied to God, 1 Tim. vi. 16; and *twice* to the resurrection body of the saints. 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54. There is nothing in this word, to prove endless happiness, but merely endless existence.

The word *aphtharsia* occurs *seven* times in the New Testament, and is derived from *a* negative, and *phtharsis* corruption, and signifies in-

corruption, incorruptibility. It is *three* times applied to the resurrection body of the saints. 1 Cor. xv. 50, 53, 54. *Twice* to doctrines. Eph. vi. 24; Tit. ii. 7. And *twice* applied to christian principle. Rom. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 10. Nothing appears in the use of this word to prove endless happiness; but only the unchangeable state of things in the future world.

The adjective *aidios* is derived from *aei* always, according to Parkhurst, and signifies eternal, or endless. This word is employed to express the endless nature of the chains that bind the fallen angels. Jude 6. If the endless misery of devils is satisfactorily proved, which is undeniable in the present case, it affords a strong reason to induce us to believe in the endless nature of human misery, in a future state. This word occurs only in one other place, in the New Testament, and is employed to express the eternity of God. Rom. i. 20.

I am, &c.

JOSEPH MCKEE.

LETTER No. XI.

BALTIMORE, Feb. 24, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph M'Kee:

Dear Sir—In this discussion it is understood, that I am acting on the defensive, as you made the attack on Universalism, and requested the privilege of offering your objections against it, and of refuting the arguments by which it is supported. It is my place then to examine what you advance—but since your

present letter contains hardly anything which requires an answer, I shall devote a portion of my reply to those "arguments" which you are so reluctant to approach. Before proceeding to these, however, I will notice, 1. Your reply to the following statement of mine—"You admit that *olam* in Dan. xii. 2, and *aionios* in Matt. xxv. 46, are synonymous, though you denied this in Letter No. 1." To this you reply—"I admitted nothing of the kind." Then sir, I know not the meaning of language, for in Letter No. VI. labouring to show that Dan. xii. 2, referred to the eternal world, and was descriptive of endless bliss and woe, you say: "It is worthy of remark, that the duration, both of the happiness of the righteous, and contempt of the wicked, are expressed by the word *olam* in the Hebrew, *aionios* in the Greek and everlasting in the English." Thus do you assert that *olam* and *aionios* are the same. 2. You deny saying anything of *olam* in Letter No. I. To place this matter fairly before the reader, the following from my first communication must be inserted: 'I am aware that Paul used *aionios*, or everlasting, but, this is applied to hills, mountains, covenants, priesthoods and a great variety of things limited in their nature.' To this you affect great astonishment, and accuse me of writing it to deceive the unlearned. Not suspecting that you were resting on a mere quibble, I replied by saying, that the learned admitted that *aionios* and *olam* are synonymous, when lo and behold! it turns out that I am accused of deceiving, because I did not use the precise word of the inspired writer, and not because

I did not convey his meaning. By this rule I can prove that the inspired writers say nothing of God or Christ, heaven or hell, life or death, for they did not use these very words. Olam in the Hebrew, aionios in the Greek, and everlasting in the English, are used as I said, and if the first two are synonymous, as the learned admit, and as you have admitted, my argument is good, and my assertion true.

It is a little amusing to hear you insinuate, that I have been guilty of some gross perversions of your language, and that it is painful for you to point these out. I beg that your tender feelings may not deter you from duty, and especially since I have not spared you in this respect: go on Sir, and give the instances.

2. In saying that the meaning of aionios must be determined by the noun to which it is applied, and the circumstances under which it is used, I asserted nothing contrary to the rules of language. As for instance, when we say a great man, a great house, and a great mountain, although the adjective qualifies the noun, we decide its extent of meaning in the three cases, from the nouns. So with aionios, and so all critics admit. My position then, is not 'absurd,' neither does it 'invert the established order of language.'

3. You say my various definitions of aionios are assumed, but by turning to Letter No. VI. the reader will see that such is not the case.

4. My assertion that the believer of to-day may be the infidel of to-morrow, is denied; and this denial is backed up by some foreign statements respecting the indestructible nature of

Christ's kingdom. If your position here means anything, it is, that saints cannot fall from grace. When you will avow this doctrine, I am ready to discuss it. Till then, I will not allow you to shift from Metho- lism to Calvinism, to evade the force of my arguments.

5. I deny that Col. iii. 24 ; Heb. xi. 26 ; Rev. xxii. 12, refer to the future state ; and until you prove this, all you have said on that head, will weigh nothing. That the primitive Christians were rewarded, is certain, and I have shown that this reward is called 'zœon aionion.' You say by my rule, a man can have fifty everlasting lives ; but all this is merely playing around the question, without attacking the main position—and such is the case with your whole letter.

6. You say, my quotation from Clarke is a perversion. Will you show this?

7. Your denial that our Lord applied Dan. xii. 2, to the destruction of Jerusalem, is like denying the existence of a God, when nature and revelation declare it in language that none can mistake. The atheist can deny the Divine existence, but he cannot sustain his denial, neither can you yours. If you can, why not do it?

8. On the text "ordained to life," I need only remark, that the life to which those were ordained, as mentioned in Eph. i. 4, 5, 11 ; ii. 10 ; Rom. viii. 29, 30, is not endless life. See Whitby and Clarke on these. Your inference, therefore, about reprobation is quite too fast.

9. All you have said on Matt. xii. 31, respecting the sin against the Holy Ghost, is refuted by the fact, that after the positive negation, comes the phrase "neither in this world, (age) neither

in the world (age) to come." (See Letters No. III. and VI.) Clarke says: "Though I follow the common translation, I am satisfied the meaning of the words is, neither in this dispensation, (the Jewish) nor in that which is to come, (the Christian.)" He also says: "'World to come' is a common phrase among Jewish writers for the times of the Messiah." Thus your negation is limited.

10. What you have said respecting my answers to your six questions, will not divert me from the main topic of this discussion. I cannot, however, refrain from making one remark: You say, "if I show that there is no proof of endless wo, it does not prove that there is no such wo." Now this, Sir, appears to be a very singular remark, and especially when we consider, that our inquiry is "whether the Bible teaches interminable suffering." What you have said in defence of a personal devil, and of Christ being his own father, is entitled to about as much consideration as this. But if it were ever so forcible, I would not reply to it, because it is foreign from our discussion. After we shall have settled the subject of this discussion, I will cheerfully buckle on the armour with you, in examining one or both of the other topics. Till then, I shall say nothing respecting them, even though, in the overflowings of your charity, you accuse Universalists of infidelity, because they differ with you respecting this. What aid you can expect from such observations, it is impossible to conceive. When will you learn to be candid?

11. If the reader can see any bearing or force in your remarks respecting Christ giving all

eternal life, or how that which God has *given*, which he *gave* in Christ before the world began, can be dependent on faith for its existence, he must be blest with a more penetrating mind than I can boast of. I will therefore pass to consider what you have said respecting my proofs, drawn from the life of Christ's priesthood, and from the testimony of Paul in 1. Cor. xv.

To bring this testimony fairly before the mind, let us consider first that he is teaching the resurrection of all men. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," (v. 22.) Taking it for granted (for this you admit,) that he was teaching the resurrection of all men, we ask,

12. To what state does he say they will be raised? This he expresses, 1. by three words, *apthartos*, *athanasia*, and *aptharsia*, which you admit are never applied to anything impure.—Hence, according to your own showing, in the words used to express the unchangeable state, the idea of corruption, of mortality, or impurity is utterly excluded, and of course misery. 2. At the resurrection, the song of victory, as I showed in Letter No. VI. is to be sung over death and hades and sin. Consequently, all must be freed from their dominion. This I also proved by Paul's allusion to Isai. xxv. 8; which, in direct contradiction to Paul, you refer to the church on earth. Let me add, 3. That at the resurrection, Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God, and God will be all in all. The apostle says, he shall reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet, till he hath subdued all; and then the end will come, when he will give up his mediatorial reign. It will not answer to say, his enemies will be sub-

dued, but not saved; for Christ carries on his warfare against sin, and has only gained the victory, when his enemy becomes his friend. Not only so, God is to be all in all, and this cannot be, unless all are holy. Thus the life which Christ will give to all men, is strictly endless, (*akatalutou.*) What will you have more than the reconciliation of all to God, God all in all, in a world of incorruptibility and immortality?—What is here proved of one man, is proved of all, for you admit that the apostle was speaking of the resurrection of all men. Your *highly classical* figure, drawn from the *height* and *thumbs* of man, can weigh nothing against such overwhelming testimony as this. To say that he was speaking of the church exclusively, is to say that only the church will be raised. But as the dead, or all who died in Adam, are to be raised, all who died in Adam will finally be as the angels of God in heaven—holy and happy—they will die no more. The Bible abounds with this kind of testimony. In Rom. viii. 19—22, we read: “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope: Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” Here the word rendered *creature* and *creation* is the same (*ktisis*,) and consequently all, (that is the whole creation) who are subject to vanity, are finally to be delivered

into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Universalism therefore is true.

In Eph. i. 9, 10, we read: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself; That, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him." These words teach Universalism, 1. Because God wills the salvation of all men, See 1 Tim. ii. 4. 2. Because he does all things after the counsel of his own will and pleasure. 3. Because it is his purpose to save all men. He sent not his Son to condemn (John 3. 17,) but to save the world.—For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, (1 John iii. 8.) 4. The phrase "all things" indisputably proves these positions, for it signifies all men. Thus Peter (Acts iii. 21) speaks of the times of the restitution of "all things." So Paul, (1 Cor. xv. 28,) "when "all things" shall be subdued, then shall the Son be subject to him that put 'all things under him.'" He also says, (Heb. i. 2,) "whom he hath appointed heir of "all things." Christ then will restore all men.

In 1 Tim. ii. 1—7. we read: "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God,

and one mediator between God and men; the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher." Here we ask, what was Paul ordained to preach? The text gives the answer: That there is one God who wills the salvation of all, and that there is one mediator who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. Suppose a Methodist were to state the doctrine he was ordained to preach, would he be likely to say nothing of endless wo; but on the other hand, speak of God's will to save all, and the mission of Christ to accomplish this will?—Thus did an inspired apostle. We have only to inquire then, whether God's will, will be accomplished, and Christ succeed in the object of his mission?

In Heb. ii. 10, we read: 'For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect thro' sufferings.' The word here rendered *many*, as "many sons," is *pollous*, and signifies, according to Parkhurst, the "whole bulk of mankind," and is equivalent to (*pantas anthropous*,) all men, in Rom. v. 12. See also verses 15, 19. All men then are to be brought to glory, through the ministry of Christ. Hence Paul says, in the verses preceeding, "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. Now we see not, yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every

man." Here we see that "all things" are used as synonymous with "many sons," and that all are to be put under, or subjected to Christ. How then can any be finally lost?

In Heb. ii. 14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil." These words teach the destruction of death and the devil; and consequently the end of all misery; for as death is the last enemy, and as the devil hath power over death, there can be no misery after their destruction.

These, Sir, are only a few among the countless passages which I have in reserve, and which I trust I shall have an opportunity of bringing forward before this discussion shall end. And if the word, the oath, and the promise of the Almighty are proof, I have no fears of showing beyond the possibility of refutation, that Universalism is the truth of God. Thus far you have been labouring to prove that partialism is sustained by these; but with what success the reader must judge.

Your argument from *aidios* in Jude 6, is unworthy a reply, for the apostle asserts the limitation of the word. Observe—"Hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment, &c." I should as soon produce the declaration of Jonah, that the earth and her bars were about him forever, to prove eternity, as Jude 6, to prove the eternity of misery.

As you have again reiterated your charge of forgery upon Lexicons, I will here insert the

dates of those to which I referred, though I must remark, that this is useless, and is not customary in such references. Besides, you must know that your charge is false, or else your boasted professions of scholarship are groundless; for I can hardly conceive of a profound Greek scholar being ignorant of the standard works to which I have referred. Further, if you suspected what you say, why not examine the Lexicons for yourself? Sir, I blush to own, that I am discussing Theology with a man, and he a minister of Christ, who can stoop to an act like this!

The dates are as follows: Jones, 2d edition, London, 1825; Hincks, Lond. 1831; Schweighauser, 2d ed. Lond. 1830; Valpey, Lond. 1828; Donnegan, 1st Ame. from 2d Lond. ed. Boston, 1833; Schrevelius, N. Y. 1832; Grove, Boston, 1833; Pickering, Bost. by Hilliard Gray, & Co. Hedericus, Phil 1820.

I will only add, in calling for these dates, you have required of me what you have done only in a few instances. In all your quotations from Lexicographers on Gehenna, in Letter No. VIII. you have not given dates. But I suppose you think with Chalmers, that saints, those who have attained to the highest degree of purity and perfection, may do with impunity, what would be highly criminal in mankind in general.

I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

P. S. In your 8th letter, among other false things, you stated that Mr. Thomas Whittemore, whom, in your sneering manner, you were pleased to style one of the *oracles* of Universalism, denied the existence of good angels. Not having

all the works of this able and indefatigable ministering brother before me, and being determined to state nothing but what I knew to be correct, I let the statement pass, intending to write Brother Whittemore, and ascertain whether he had ever advanced such a sentiment, and if he had not, to contradict your assertion. But while preparing a letter to him, I received the following, addressed to me, through the "Trumpet and Magazine," of which Mr. W. is the editor. Justice to the falsely accused, requires its insertion: and let me here say, if you wish to continue this discussion, you must pay some little regard to truth in your statements respecting Universalism and Universalists. Here follows the letter:—

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Brother—I perceive you are now engaged in a controversy with Rev. Joseph M'Kee, on the subject of the final restoration of all things to God. I have perused it with much pleasure, and I hope no small profit; and I doubt not it is deeply interesting to the numerous readers of your very valuable paper, the "Pioneer." But will you do me the favour to ask of your reverend correspondent, how he knows I deny the existence of angels. He says in his 8th letter, "Mr. Whittemore denies the existence of good and evil angels." How does he know this statement to be correct? I have never denied the existence of a superior order of beings called angels, and never expect to. I read of them frequently in the scriptures. They sang at the Saviour's birth, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men." I frequently mention them in my public services; and if I permitted the statement

of the Rev. gentlemen to go uncontradicted, I should subject myself to the charge of gross hypocrisy. Permit me to say, in closing this article, that there are many of your correspondent's statements as utterly destitute of truth, as the one above mentioned; but as I find him in the care of one so well able to detect his fallacies, I shall contradict only what he has said in regard to myself. Yours respectfully,

THOMAS WHITTEMORE.

LETTER, No. XII.

BELL AIR, March 4, 1835.

To Rev. O. A. Skinner,

Dear Sir—In reviewing your *seventh* letter with the deepest solicitude, I can find nothing against my *twelve* objections, worthy the name of argument or acute criticism. It contains a large proportion of extraneous matter, well interlarded with bold assertions and self-confident declamation, which can have no weight with the considerate part of the community. You appear to think that positive assertions, if given in sufficient quantity, will very well supply the deficiency of sound argument. This is manifest by the liberal use you have made of the word *assume*, in replying to my objections. In looking over your letter I find the word "*assumed*," occurs *once*; "*assumption*," *four* times; "*assumptions*," *five* times; and "*assume*," *nine* times, making in all, **NINETEEN** times in the compass of one letter. The reflecting part of man-

kind are not such stupid blockheads as to receive these reiterated assertions for logical reasoning, or scripture proof. I might, with as much propriety, call every sentiment contained in your creed, mere assumption; but I choose to shew their fallacy and dangerous tendency by sound and incontrovertible arguments. You have given no satisfactory answer to any one of the twelve objections; much less to the whole; and, if any one of them cannot be fairly met and legitimately answered, Universalism is overthrown. The several metaphors of the *wheat* and the *chaff*; *barren* and *fruitful tree*, *savoury* and *unsavoury salt*, *good* and *bad fish*, &c. have not had any thing in the shape of an answer. My application of them, to a future state, you call assumption, and so pass them over. That the inspired writers intended to point out by them, the final state of mankind in the eternal world, is manifest from the following considerations: 1. The character of the righteous and that of the wicked in this life, are contrasted with each other; the former represented by the *wheat*, *fruitful trees*, &c. the latter by the *chaff*, *unfruitful trees*, &c.— 2. The final states of these respective characters are also contrasted by the dispositions of these metaphors; the *chaff* and the *wheat*, &c. are *separated* from each other. 3. The final safety of the righteous, and the final and irrecoverable ruin of the wicked, are, in like manner, contrasted; the wheat is gathered into the garner; but the chaff is burned up. 4. To apply these metaphors to temporal death, or the destruction of the body in this world, would not only confuse and destroy all force, beauty, propriety, and meaning

of language, but palpably contradict both the letter and the spirit of the expressions used by the inspired writers. I will not, I cannot admit of any explanation that palpably contradicts the sacred text. A doctrine which stands in direct contradiction to the language of Holy Scripture, as Universalism unquestionably does, must necessarily be false.

As you appear to lay great stress upon the opinions of "orthodox critics," I shall lay before you some of their sentiments concerning the metaphors on which my *twelve* objections are founded. And as you have appealed to *Clarke*, to *Clarke* you shall go, and I will abide by his decision.

I am greatly astonished that you gave the names of commentators by wholesale, as being in favor of the doctrine of Universalism, when it is well known to every well informed man, that every commentator who wrote on the Scriptures in the English language, is opposed to Universalism as an injurious heresy.

The quotations which I shall make, are from *Henry*, *Wesley* and *Clarke*.

Objection 1. Wheat and chaff. Matt. iii: 12.

Mr. Henry says, "Hell is the *unquenchable fire*, which will burn up the chaff, which will certainly be the portion and punishment, and everlasting destruction of hypocrites and unbelievers." *Com. in loc.*

Obj. 2. Fruitful and unfruitful tree. Matt. iii. 10.

On these metaphors, *Henry* observes—
"Fruitless trees will be cut down by death and

cast into the fire of hell, a fire blown by the bellows of God's wrath, and fed with the wood of barren trees." *Com. in loc.*

Obj. 3. The salt having lost its savour. Matt. v. 13.

Our Lord says of this salt, it is thenceforth good for nothing. If the finally impenitent or apostates, who are represented by the salt, should, at any future time, enjoy eternal life in heaven, these words of our blessed Savior must not only be void of meaning, but absolutely false.

Obj. 4. The last state of the man is worse than the first. Matt. xii. 43—44.

On these words, *Mr. Wesley* remarks, "*They (the seven spirits) enter in and dwell—Forever, in him who is forsaken of God. So shall it be to this wicked generation—Yea, and to all apostates in all ages.*" *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 5. The good and bad fish. Matt. xiii. 47.

On this text you have given a distorted view of *Clarke's* comment, for, in his exposition, I find the following comment: "*By picking out the good and throwing away the bad, ver. 48, is meant that separation which God shall make between false and true professors, casting the former into hell, and bringing the latter to heaven.*" *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 6, The wheat and the tares. Matt. xiii. 24—30.

On these words *Mr. Henry* says, "*Hell is the furnace of fire, kindled by the wrath of God, and kept burning by the bundles of tares cast into it, who will be ever in the consuming, but never consumed.*" *Com. in loc.*

Clarke says, "These words may refer, 1. To the creation of the world. 2. To the Jewish state and people. 3. To the state in which the world shall be found when he (Christ) comes to judge it. The righteous and the wicked shall be permitted to grow together, till God comes to make a full and final separation." *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 7. The five foolish virgins shut out. Matt. xxv. 1—12.

On these words *Henry* observes, "The state of saints and sinners will then be unalterably fixed, and those that are shut out then, will be shut out forever." *Com. in loc.*

Clarke says, "*Then shall the kingdom of heaven.* The state of Jews and professing christians, or the state of the visible church at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and in the day of judgment; for the parable appears to relate to both those periods. And particularly to the time in which Christ shall come to judge the world, it will appear what kind of reception his gospel has met with." Again, "*The door was shut.* Sinners on a death bed too often meet with those deceitful merchants, who promise them salvation for a price which is of no value in the sight of God. Come unto me, says Jesus, and buy—there is no salvation but through his blood, no hope for the sinner but that which is founded upon his sacrifice and death. *The door was shut*—dreadful and fatal words! No hope remains. Nothing but death can shut this door—but death may surprise us in our sins, and then death is our only portion." *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 8. The parable of the talents. Matt. xxv. 14—30.

On the punishment of the unprofitable servant mentioned in the parable, *Dr. Clarke* remarks : “He is *punished* with an everlasting separation from God and the glory of his power. *Cast forth the unprofitable servant*, ver. 30. Let him have nothing but *darkness*, who refused to walk in the *light* : let him have nothing but *misery, weeping and gnashing of teeth*, who has refused the *happiness* which God provided for him.

Reader, if the *careless virgin* and the *unprofitable servant* against whom no *flagrant* iniquity is *charged*, be punished with an *outer darkness*, with a *hell of fire*; of what sorer punishment must he be judged worthy, who is a *murderer*, * * * a *blasphemer*, a *thief*, a *liar*, or in any respect an *open violator* of the *laws* of God ? The *careless virgins* and the *unprofitable servant* were *saints* in comparison of millions, who are, notwithstanding, dreaming of an endless heaven, when fitted only for an endless hell !” *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 9. The parable of the feast. Luke xiv. 15—24.

On this parable *Clarke* says but little, and refers his readers to *Matt. xxii. 1—14*, where it is largely explained, in which explanation I find the following words :—“That if this *marriage* do not take place *here*, an *eternal separation* from God, and from the glory of his power shall be the fearful consequence.” *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 10. The rich man and Lazarus. Luke xvi. 19—31.

On this parable *Wesley* remarks, “But Abraham said, Son—according to the flesh. Is it not worthy of observation that Abraham will not re-

vile even a damned soul? Shall living men revile one another? *Thou in thy life time receivest thy good things*: Thou didst choose and accept of worldly things as thy good, thy happiness. And can any one be at a loss to know why he was in torments? 'This damnable idolatry, had there been nothing more, was enough to sink him to the nethermost hell.' *Notes in loc.*

Clarke says, "This account of the *rich man* and *Lazarus* is either a *parable* or a *real history*. If it be a *parable*, it is what *may be*; if it be a *real history*, it is that which *has been*. Either, a man may live as is here described and go to perdition when he dies: or, some have lived in this way, and are now suffering the torments of an eternal fire. The account is equally instructive, in which soever of these lights it is viewed."—Aguiñ, "The torments which a soul endures in the hell of fire, will form through all eternity a continual present course of indescribable woe. *Actual* torment in the flames of the bottomless pit, forms a fourth circumstance in the punishment of the lost." *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 11. *The vine and its branches*. John xv. 5, 6.

Henry says, on these words, "They will be burned forever in a fire, which not only cannot be quenched, but which will never spend itself." *Com. in loc.*

In explanation of this metaphor, Clarke says, "*He is cast forth*: Observe, that person who abides not in Christ, in a believing, loving, obedient spirit, is 1. *Cut off* from Jesus, having no longer any regard or title to him, or to his salvation. 2. *He is withered*—deprived of all the in-

fluences of God's grace and spirit ; loses all his heavenly unction ; becomes indifferent, cold, and dead to every holy and spiritual word and work. 3. He is *gathered*—becomes (through the judgment of God) again united with backsliders like himself, and other workers of iniquity ; and being abandoned to his own heart and Satan ; he is 4. *Cast into the fire*—separated from God's people, from God himself, and from the glory of his power. And 5. *He is burned*—is eternally tormented with the devil and his angels, and with all those who have lived and died in their iniquity. Reader ! pray God that this may never be thy portion." *Notes in loc.*

Obj. 12. The trees twice dead. Jude 12.

On this passage *Mr. Wesley* writes, "*Twice dead*—In sin, first by nature, and afterward by apostacy, *plucked up by the roots*: And so incapable of ever reviving." *Notes in loc.*

Now sir, what think you of the testimony of "orthodox critics" respecting the metaphors in debate? Clarke, to whose authority you have appealed, has decided against Universalism in favour of the doctrine of endless misery. What now? You have appealed to him against my views ; I am satisfied to abide by his decision throughout, so away goes the novel doctrine of Universalism to the four winds.

'The four texts which you cite, in the last section of your letter, in proof of the doctrine of Universalism are entirely perverted and misapplied to support an erroneous system.

John xii. 32. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." I can see no proof in these words that the punishment

of the wicked is not eternal. Nor do I think any man living can, unless blinded by a false creed, or basely interested in the establishment of a false doctrine. All that our Saviour could mean, by the words in question was, that if he should be put to death on the cross, he would, by the influence of his Holy Spirit on the human heart, enlighten both Jews and Gentiles, and thereby put the means of salvation within their reach, that those who should obey his holy gospel should be everlastingly saved.

Rom. v. 20. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—These words relate to the fall of mankind in Adam, and their restoration by Jesus Christ.—That all men fell in Adam is admitted; that provision is made for the restoration of all in Christ is also admitted, which is all that is intended in this text. It is not said that all mankind shall be made righteous. But supposing it was, and that in the most positive manner, it would not prove the final salvation of all men, according to your own account: for, you said in your 6th letter that the believer of to-day may be the infidel of to-morrow. So that although all had eternal life, or were made righteous in this life, they may not be eternally saved.

1 John iv. 14. "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." These words prove that God has, of his unbounded mercy, sent his son into the world to purchase, by his obedience and death; the salvation of the world; and, although it is prepared in Christ, its application to the human

heart is contingent, depending on the condition of faith and the co-operation of the will of the creature. 'Though Christ died for all, it by no means follows that all will be saved eternally, for the disobedient and faithless shall be cast into the lake of fire; or in other words, be punished with endless misery.

Eph. i. 9, 10. "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in him." It is a universally admitted fact, both in church and state, that, that which proves too much proves nothing at all. And by this very rule the text in question can prove nothing in favour of Universalism. It is said that *all things* in heaven and earth shall be collected in one in Christ. Does this mean all men, angels, devils, beasts, birds, fishes, insects and reptiles in heaven and earth? Or does it mean only a part of all things? A part doubtless. But where are its limits? Does it include both men and devils? You deny the salvation of devils. I deny the salvation of all men. This text can be of no use to your cause till you prove that all things mean all mankind, and this you cannot do till the last trumpet shall sound. The true meaning of the text is this: God has determined to collect in one, in Christ, at the last day, all the parts of the general church, including angels and all the redeemed among Jews and Gentiles, in all the nations of the earth. From these remarks, it appears plainly, that if Universalism has got noth-

ing but these four texts to support it, down it must fall to rise no more forever.

I shall now proceed to the consideration of some particulars in your *eighth* letter.

Your remark concerning Whitfield is too scurrilous to have any place in a religious discussion, or to merit any reply from me ; therefore, I shall take no notice of it.

You say I was mistaken when I said Origen was the first Universalist. This is more than you have proved or can prove. I say again that Origen was the first Universalist, and I defy you to show that a single vestige of it existed before his day. Consequently, Universalism is a false doctrine, or Christ and his Apostles and all others who lived before Origen were ignorant of the true doctrine of the gospel. Take which side you please. But I shall adduce proofs of my assertions. In a note in the Encyclopædia, (*Phil. Edit. vol. XIII. page 492*) it is affirmed that—"Origen is the first Christian, (whose notions on this subject have come down to us) who believed in the restoration of all things." The British Encyclopædia testifies the same fact. (*Art. Origen.*) The same sentiment concerning him is maintained by Dr. Maclaine, (*See Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. I. page 168 : Balt. 1832.*) where his errors are summed up as follow: "The tenets of Origen," says the Dr. "which gave the greatest offence, were the following: 1 That, in the Trinity, the Father is greater than the Son, and the Son, than the Holy Ghost. 2. The pre-existence of souls, which Origen considered as sent into mortal bodies for the punishment of sins committed in a former state of being.

3. That the soul of Christ was united with the word before the incarnation. 4. That the sun, moon and stars, &c. were animated and endowed with rational souls. 5. That after the resurrection all bodies will be of a round figure. 6. *That the torments of the damned will have an end*; and that, as Christ had been crucified in this world to save mankind, he is to be crucified in the next to save the devils."

These sentiments, together with the circumstance of his excommunication, sufficiently warrant me in calling him a heretic; and also show evidently that he was the first Universalist.—Mosheim says, "The greatest part of the Christian bishops approved the proceedings of the Alexandrian council" which excommunicated him from the Christian church.

You say the Basilidians, Carpocratians, and Valentinians held the sentiments of the Universalists before Origen. This I absolutely deny, and challenge you to produce proof. Mosheim represents Basilides, the founder of the Basilidians, as an extravagant fanatic, holding among other ridiculous absurdities, the foolish notion that there are 365 heavens, a heaven for each day in the year. Honourable authority indeed, for the doctrine of Universalism! The same historian observes concerning Carpocrates, founder of the Carpocratians, that, whatever may be said of Basilides, it is certain that he was far surpassed in impiety by Carpocrates, who was also of Alexandria, and who carried the Gnostic blasphemies to a more enormous degree of extravagance than they had ever been brought to by that sect."

(*Ecclesiastical History*, vol. i. page 73. Balt. 1832.) The above cited author represents Valentin, founder of the sect which bears his name. as one of the wildest fanatics that ever embraced the Gnostic heresy ; while his followers indulged in the most foolish and fanciful speculations, of which the human imagination is capable concerning the origin of the world, of created beings, and of our blessed Saviour. (*Ibid.*) So much for the honourable names that stand at the head of your system according to your own showing ! I call upon you to prove that these fanatics held the sentiments of Universalism or else take back what you have said on the subject.

You say Universalism is advocated in the Sibylline Oracles, a work published about the year 150 to convert heathens to the gospel. Let us see what these Oracles are. Buck, in his *Theo. Dict.* says, "they are prophecies delivered, it is said, by certain women of antiquity, showing the fates and revolutions of kingdoms. We have a collection of them in eight books. Dr. Jorton observes, that they were composed at different times by different persons, first by Pagans, and then, perhaps, by Jews, and certainly by Christians. They abounded with phrases, words, facts, and passages, taken from the LXX., and the New Testament. They are, says the Dr. a miserable specimen of astonishing impudence and miserable poetry, and seem to have been, from first to last, and without any one exception, mere impostures."

Such is the account we have of the Sibylline Oracles, and after all, no proof can be produced, either from them or from any other source, that any such doctrine as Universalism existed, in any

shape, before the days of Origen. If you cannot trace your doctrine to a higher and more respectable source it would be much better to give it up as the spurious offspring of the most contemptable parents, and take the unsophisticated word of God, in its common sense meaning, for your guide in search of religious truth.

You insinuate that I am ignorant of your order. Your order, if such it may be called, is such a heterogeneous mass, such a hodgepodge, such a babel of confusion, that no man in your own communion can fully understand it. Every man appears to have a system of his own, witness the great diversity of sentiment that exists among the oracles of Universalism. This is manifest by the violence with which you treated the sentiments of Dr. Chauncy, in the commencement of this controversy. Nor does it appear that any man among you holds the same sentiments one month together; a remarkable instance of this, may be seen in Abner Kneeland. Never did the moon pass through a greater number of changes than Universalism has assumed during the 65 years which have elapsed since the first heresiarch landed in this country.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel.

JOSEPH M'KEE.

P. S. Since writing the above, No. xviii. of the "Pioneer" fell into my hands, in which I find a note from Mr. Whittemore, wherein he denies my statement of his creed respecting good and evil angels, and asks how I know he holds such sentiments. He shall have my authority in the most unreserved manner. It is the follow-

ing: About three years ago, his work on the parables fell into my hands; and, although I read it with a sort of indescribable feeling, composed partly of solicitude, surprise and disgust, I am not able to give his own words concerning the angels, nor can I refer to the particular page, not having seen the book since. Sometime since, the "Christian Spectator," a New Haven work fell in my way. This publication, contains among other matters, (*vol. v. No. 11. page 82.*) the following words, on the authority of which, rather than memory, I made the statement: "All that the bible seems to tell us of angels, fallen and rebellious, and of angels, holy ministering spirits, these men (the Universalists) explain away."—And for proof, the reader is referred to "Whittemore on the Parables, Boston, 1832, pp. 50, 51, 47, 259." Here Sir, is my authority for saying what I did. Please tell us what the other *false things* are, that you and your correspondent allude to, that I may have the opportunity of correcting them, or proving that they are correct. If you do not produce them, the charge of falsehood will naturally fall upon your own head. I am in search of truth, and my object is to search out falsehood, and then discard it.

Yours, &c. JOSEPH M'KEE.

LETTER No. XII.

Baltimore, March. 10, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir.—Although in this discussion, I have

frequently held up to the reader's gaze and denounced in strong language, your oft repeated charges of "miserable subterfuges," "straws at which a drowning man grasps," "criticisms of which every scholar should be ashamed," "forgeries," and attempts to "deceive the unlearned," I am not conscious of having said a syllable in reply to your *arguments*, that can be construed by the most fastidious into a violation of the rules of controversial courtesy. It is true, I have exposed, and have endeavoured to set in their true light, your outrageously unfair quotations from Lexicons and Maclaine's note in Mosheim; but the peculiar enormity of these cases, and the interests of truth, required this at my hands. I had hoped from the somewhat manly tone of your tenth letter, that you had exhausted your spirit of denunciation, and seen the folly of such a course. It seems however, that I was mistaken, and that you are determined, while you wield the pen against Universalism, to show, by every form of denunciation, and every variety of abuse, the contempt with which you regard the doctrine. You are welcome, sir, to all the glory and aid of such a measure; and having found that neither "soft words" nor "sharp rebukes" will check this predominant spirit of your nature, I would now rather incur the charge of making my letters too tame, than waste time in even repeating the charges with which yours abound.

You commence your present letter by saying, that my 7th, in reply to your 'twelve objections,' "contains a large portion of extraneous matter, interlarded with bold assertions and self-confi-

dent declamation;" and by affirming, that I "have given no satisfactory answer to any one of your twelve objections." Now sir, I am unable to see any extraneous matter in that letter—you alluded to twelve texts of scripture; and those it was necessary for me to explain, which in most cases is done in the very language of some orthodox commentator. This you call "extraneous matter." As it respects my "bold assertions," I will only say, I did assert unequivocally, that you *assumed* your application of almost every text in your 7th letter, and if the words *assume*, *assumed* and *assumption* are used as frequently as you say, the fault is chargeable upon yourself. If you did not assume your application of those texts, why not prove that my "bold assertions are false?" Why sir, look at your mode of treating your proof texts. On the parable of the wheat and chaff you say: 1. "The wheat and chaff are metaphors intended to point out the condition of the righteous and the wicked in this world. 2. The disposition which was made of them, that is the gathering of the wheat &c. shows the disposition which shall be made of the righteous and the wicked at the day of judgment." Now if this be not assumption, then I know not what is. You have not given a single argument, to show that you are correct. You have relied entirely on the education and prejudice of your readers. But is this the way to learn the truth? According to this, I am combatting popular prejudice, and not argument. Clarke says, the *wheat* and *chaff* represent the Christians and the Jews in the days of the apostles, the gathering of the wheat and burning the

chaff, the separation between the Christians and the Jews, at the destruction of Jerusalem.

In your 10th letter, you have pursued precisely the same course. On Matt. xxv. 30, you say, "this text shows, what will be done with the wicked at the time time their characters shall be investigated by the Supreme Judge, and as this is represented to us as the final state of men, it is irreconcilable with Universalism." Now do you not here assume your application of this text? Do you give a single argument to show that you are correct? And yet, you complain of me, because I denounce these things as *assumptions*! Sir, if the word assumption sounds so unpleasantly in your ears, give me argument, and I will use it no more.

But what have you done in your present letter, towards showing by "sound and incontrovertible arguments," that your twelve texts in letter No. VII. were correctly applied? Why, you have lain down four propositions, which you have backed up by assertions, and assertions only!—Proof you have not given; and further, proof, I believe, you cannot give. If you can, why all this taking shelter behind the strong ramparts of popular prejudice? Why this continual going round and round the subject? Here, as in your 7th letter, you *assume*, that the wheat and chaff represent the righteous and wicked, their separation the judgment of the world, and the burning of the chaff the endless wo of the wicked. Now why not prove this? Why not give *one* argument to sustain your opinion? You have indeed said "to refer this to temporal death, is to destroy all beauty and force in the passage." But

I cannot see this : and even if it did, it does not affect the explanation given in my 7th letter. There it is referred to the judgment, which came upon the Jews at the destruction of their city, and at the abolishment of their dispensation. You may say that this 'palpably contradicts' the sacred text; but your word is no proof. Besides, I consider Clarke much better authority than Mr. M'Kee, and what you call a palpable contradiction of the text, Clarke calls its true meaning.

You say, 'I appear to lay great stress on the opinions of orthodox critics on your twelve texts.' You are right sir: I do, and for the very best of reasons. These men believed in the eternity of misery—their education taught them to believe this—all their prepossessions and prejudices were in favour of this sentiment. And yet, when they examined the texts on which you rely to prove the doctrine, they differ from you entirely—and thus, they become witnesses in our favour—and the best of witnesses too. Hence we can show the truth of Universalism, 'our enemies themselves being judges.' You express great surprise that I have given commentators by the whole-sale, as being in favour of Universalism, when they all believed in endless misery. Now, sir, I have not done this. I have only said, that they explained most of the texts usually brought to prove endless misery, as Universalists do. Consequently you have misrepresented me.

It is unnecessary for me to explain again the 'twelve texts' of your 7th letter; for you have not attempted a refutation of what I have said on them. You have simply quoted on each, a few sentences from Wesley, or Henry or Clarke:

sentences that contain merely the opinion and assertion of these men. Whereas in my 7th letter, you will find the *arguments*, as well as the opinions of orthodox commentators. Besides, suppose in my application of scripture, I should merely give the opinion of our writers—would not every discerning reader say I must be hard pushed on the field of debate? I might quote Murray, Winchester, Ballou, Balfour, Rayner, Streeter and Whittemore, and show what they have said: but though I esteem the works of these men highly, and consider them unanswerable, they are not the kind of authority which I want in this discussion. They are, however, as good for me, as your writers are for you. I shall therefore pay no attention to your quotations from Henry and Wesley.

As I made several extracts from Clarke, and as you have agreed to 'abide by his decision,' I will observe, that Clarke explains your first, second, third and fourth objections in accordance with Universalism. Now sir, have you the candour to abide by his decision? If so, acknowledge your error in regard to these texts. The fifth, sixth, and seventh texts of your letter, Clarke thinks have a double meaning, and refer 'primarily to the destruction of Jerusalem.' I will not stop to show the extreme absurdity of his notion, concerning the double meaning of scripture, but I will merely inquire, whether you will abide his decision on these?

When you will answer this in the affirmative, I am prepared to discuss the notion of the double meaning of these texts! But this you cannot do,

for you have feigned to believe it absurd, to refer such texts, to temporal calamities.

I deny the charge of distorting the views of Clarke on your fifth objection—I have given the very language where he speaks of its *primary* meaning.

Your ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth objections are fully answered in my 7th letter; and when you will point out the incorrectness of these answers, I will consider what you have said.—But to assume your application in the first place, and then to reply to my explanations by quotations from your own commentators, is more than I can permit. And unless you refute what has been said on these texts, I shall take for granted that you are unable to do it.

You say, I appealed to Clarke. I did, and in every instance in which I did, he sustained my views. I appealed also to Whitby, Grotius, Macknight, Hammond, Pearce, Lightfoot, and Cappe, and they also sustained my views. But I did not say that Clarke agrees with Universalists on all of your twelve texts, and when you intimate that I did, you intimate what every unbiassed reader knows is false. As far then as I appealed to Clarke, he justifies my explanations, and unless you falsify your word, you will admit this. It must be mortifying for you to know that all your proof texts are explained by orthodox critics, as we explain them. But so it is, and it shows the great weakness of your cause.

From the foregoing remarks, it will be seen, that you have attempted no reply to that part of my 7th letter, in which I examine your twelve

texts. Every explanation is passed in silence. My arguments therefore remain in their full force.

I will now consider what you have said, in answer to the four texts, with which I concluded that letter. John, xii. 32. 'And if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' Without producing a single argument against my application of this, you *assert*, 'that these words are no proof against the eternity of misery, and that no man, unless blinded by a *false* creed, and *basely interested* in the establishment of a false doctrine, could think they did!' O candor and charity! whither have ye fled?

You also assert that they only teach, that the means of salvation are put into the hands of Jews and Gentiles, but if to 'put the means of salvation in the hands of Jews and Gentiles,' is *drawing* ALL MEN to Christ, then it is requisite, that we should have a new dictionary, for none but a 'profound scholar' could ever discover this. 'Clarke says, that there is probably an allusion in this text, to a fable among the ancients. Jupiter, they said 'had a *chain of gold*, which he could at any time, let down from heaven, and by it, draw the earth and all its inhabitants to himself. By this chain, the poets pointed out the *union* between heaven and earth; or in other words, the government of the universe by the extensive *chain* of causes and effects. It was termed golden to point out, not only the *beneficence* of the Divine Providence; but also that infinite philanthropy of God, by which he influences and attracts all mankind to himself.' Love then, is the golden chain by which Jesus will

draw all men to himself. And sir, this passage would satisfy me that Universalism is true, did not the phrase all men occur in it, for the figure used, and the means described, prove it beyond all dispute. Jesus will display his goodness, and *draw a world* to his own bosom, by the cords of love. Methodists have often declared, that there is not an unconditional promise in the Bible. There was originally a condition in the text before us—that condition has been fulfilled, Jesus *was* lifted up. Now, therefore, the promise is unconditional. I WILL draw all men unto me.

Promises of this nature may be found on almost every page of the Bible. Thus we read: 'In thee *shall* all the families of the earth be blessed. (Gen. xii. 3, xxviii. 14, xxii. 18.) All the ends of the world *shall* remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations *shall* worship before him. (Psal. xxii. 27.) He *will* swallow up death in victory, and he *will* wipe away tears from all faces. (Isai. xxv. 8.) Every knee *shall* bow, and every tongue *shall* swear, not that they should be justly condemned, but that in the Lord they have righteousness and strength. (Isai. xlv. 23, 24.)

2. Rom. v. 20. 'For as by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous.' These words you *assert*, (and this is all, for you give no proof) simply teach, that provision is made for all men. But does not the text say, *shall be made righteous*? And therefore, does it not show, what Christ will actually accomplish, rather than what he is able, or has the means of

accomplishing? Observe, it does not say, as by the disobedience of one, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, provision is made for the righteousness of many; but it says, that *many shall be made righteous*. As though sensible that something more than a provision of salvation is taught, in these words, in order to evade their force, you declare, 'it is not said that all mankind shall be made righteous.' Now sir, if the word *many*, does not mean all mankind in the last clause of the text, it cannot in the first. Consequently, according to your explanation, all mankind did not die in Adam.

Not only so, provision cannot be made, as you admit for all, for *many* is the word used to express the number, for whom, what you call the 'provision,' was made. Besides, the word here rendered *many*, according to Parkhurst, means the whole bulk of mankind, and is équiv-alent to (*pantas anthropous*) all men, in verses 12, 18. Therefore, your declaration, that there is nothing said in the text, of all mankind being made righteous, is far from the truth, as the east is from the west.

Your attempt to rescue this text from my hands, on the authority of my statement, that the believer of to-day, may be the infidel of to-morrow, is a failure for three reasons:

1. It applies language, which I used with respect to men in this world, where all is imperfection, to their final state, where they will be freed from all sin and imperfection. And surely, nothing can be more unfair.

2. You deny that statement; and therefore ac-

according to your reasoning, my remarks on Rom. v. 19, are sound.

3. Paul in the 5th of Rom. shows, that grace will reign beyond sin, and abound more than sin. It reigns beyond, because it destroys sin, and makes all those righteous, whom sin had polluted. It abounds more, because it not only destroys sin, but makes all men endlessly happy. Thus he says, 'where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life,' that is, reign beyond death, and over all men. Now to talk about some becoming wicked, when 'death is conquered, hell disappointed, the devil confounded, and sin totally destroyed,' is absurd in the highest degree.

3. 1 John iv. 14. 'And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son, to be the Saviour of the world.' What have you offered to prove that this, does not teach Universalism? Not an argument! You have not attempted an argument! You have *asserted*, it is true, that it simply teaches that means are prepared for the salvation of all; but as this directly contradicts the text, it will only go for an assertion.

1. These words teach the purpose of God to save all men. Observe, 'the Father, sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.' Here the great purpose of God is clearly expressed. Now we have only to ask, whether God will accomplish this purpose? Hear his own answer. As I have purposed, so shall it stand; (Isai. xiv. 24) the Lord hath purposed it, who shall disannul it?

(27) I have purposed it, and I will also do it. (Isai. 46, 11.) Methodists, I know pretend, that God purposed the salvation of mankind on certain conditions, which at the time, he knew, all would not comply with. Now while I admit, that his purposes are so far conditional, that none can be saved, without repentance, I deny that God could purpose what he knew would not be done, because this would be acting against knowledge. Man in all his folly, never attempts to do, what he knows he shall not. Neither does he attempt to do a thing in a way, he knows he cannot. And if God purposed to save only those who comply with certain conditions, and knew at the time, that all would not comply, he never purposed to save all. And therefore the text is false, if Methodism is true.

2. These words teach that Christ is the Saviour of the world. But how can he be its Saviour, unless he saves it? You will perhaps say he is a Saviour, because he offers to save. But is offering to save, saving? Suppose I see a man perishing with hunger, and offer to supply him with food, but do not, and the man dies, can I be called his Saviour? Assuredly not. But if we admit that offering to save is saving, even this does not entitle Christ to the appellation of a universal Saviour; for not one fourth part of the world has had the offers of salvation. This we know, therefore we know that Methodism is false. Because admitting the common explanation of this subject, Christ is not entitled to the appellation of the Saviour of the world.

The scriptures bear us out in this reasoning. They ascribe complete success to the Saviour.

'They declare that Christ shall have the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession (Psal ii. 8.) that the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand (Isai. liii. 10) and that having subdued all he will deliver up the kingdom to God. 1 Cor. xv. 24.

4. Eph. 1—9—10. Having made known into us the mystery of his will, &c. You seek to evade the force of my argument, drawn from this text, by saying, that the application I give it, proves too much, and therefore proves nothing at all. You then ask, 'if *all things* means all men, angels, devils, beasts, birds, fishes, insects, and reptiles in heaven and in earth.' Now sir, when we consider that Christ came to save *men*, that he gave his life a ransom for *all men*, that the Bible is a revelation to *men*, concerning the will, purpose and pleasure of God respecting them, and that nothing is said within its sacred pages, concerning the salvation of beasts, &c. or about Christ dying for any but human intelligencies, your question appears lame beyond expression. I admit, that the phrase 'all things' is sometimes used to express what God has created, and what he sees; and that then it includes all, and more than you have said; but when it is used in relation to salvation, it can only refer to those, who are its subjects, and for whom Christ died.

'That he might gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven, and on earth.' Now, if you limit 'all things,' as it respects things on earth, which Christ came to save, you must limit it, as respects things in heaven. And therefore you must say, that there will be hu-

man intelligencies in heaven, that will not be in Christ. But the text does not say *some* of all things, but *all things* in heaven and on earth.

Professor Stuart, of Andover College, Mass. says: 'Things in heaven, earth, and under the earth, is a common periphrasis of the Hebrew and New Testament writers, for the universe.' See his letters to Dr. Channing on Unitarianism. The correctness of this remark is unquestionable, and therefore, we can say, with the Revelator, that 'every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall sing, blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the lamb forever and ever.' There are but two answers, which I have ever heard given to this text. The first is, that it proves too much, and the second that every creature in heaven, &c. saw John, singing this song, and not that John saw every creature! And why not say this, as well as to say, that 'all things' means 'a part,' and that when Paul says, 'every knee shall bow,' he means, *some* knees shall bow?

Thus sir, I have considered your assertions, and I think fully sustained my application of the four texts contained in letter No. 7. I have but a short space for remarks on what you have said concerning my 8th letter. And but a few remarks are necessary; for you have not attacked a single position which I there took concerning Gehenna.

You charge me with scurrility in speaking of

Whitfield. Be it remembered, that I have not said a word for or against him. I merely quoted his happy apology for rambling in one of his sermons, to justify my departure from the subject in discussion.

Your proofs that Origen was the first Universalist, next claim our attention. 1. You deny that the Basilidians, Carpocratians, and Valentinians believed in the restoration of all men. But not a word have you given to prove this denial. To say 'I maintain,' 'I deny,' and 'I assert' is quite easy, but no man who has *proof* will deal in such things in a controversy like this. In the *Ancient History of Universalism*, a work of undisputed authority and unrivalled merit, p. 45, we read, "The Carpocratians, who arose at the same time with the Basilidians agreed with them in the final salvation of all souls." On pp. 42 and 47 the same views are ascribed to the Valentinians.

That these sects were fanatical, I admit, tho' Lardner says, 'that as bad things were said of the primitive christians, as were ever said of them.' Slandering opposing sects has been the besetting sin of Christians in all ages. Look at the vile things said of Methodists, at their first organization. But what if these sects were impious and fanatical, does that prove the doctrine of the restoration false? In all that the fathers said against them, we find not a word of complaint on this ground, which is indisputable proof, that the doctrine of the Restoration was the common sentiment of that day (A. D. 120.) If it had not been, they would have condemned them for this.

Were I disposed to flourish about honourable authority, as you have done, I could remind you that the Hebrews had no faith in endless wo, until their acquaintance with heathens, and I could show that this barbarous tenet has the same parentage with necromancy, witchcraft, idolatry and all the fooleries and mumery of Pagan temples. Honourable authority! yea honourable origin! might I exclaim, but this is foreign from our discussion.

2. The Sibyline Oracles. All your quotations respecting these may be true, and yet they teach Universalism. The fact in relation to these oracles is: They are the pretended prophecies of ancient sibyls, which were supposed to be prophetesses of extraordinary inspiration among the Romans and Greeks; and their books were only consulted on emergencies, and by order of the government. The great veneration in which these were held among the vulgar, induced some zealots to fabricate, under the name of the sibyls, and in the form of ancient predictions, a narrative of the most striking events of what was then considered the Christian faith. This was sent out into the world to convert the heathens, by the pretended testimony of their own prophetesses. The plan was seized with avidity by orthodox Christians in general; and Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch and Clemens Alexandrinus, quote it as genuine, and urged its testimonies as indubitable evidence. What then, though these books were 'brought forth in iniquity,' they are valuable, inasmuch as they show the sentiments of the Christians at that time. They were forged, according to Cave, A. D. 130, to Du Pin

150, and to Lardner 169 or 190. In book II. p. 212, Edit. Apopoei, Paris, 1607, we find the following, relative to mankind after the judgment, "The omnipotent incorruptible God, shall confer another favour on his worshippers, when they shall ask him : he shall save mankind from the pernicious fire and immortal agonies. This will he do," &c. Here sir, is Universalism before Origen.

8. Clemens Alexandrinus, who was bishop of Alexandria, and teacher of Origen, was a Universalist. Daille, an orthodox writer says, "It is manifest, throughout his works, that Clemens thought all the punishments which God inflicts upon men are salutary, and executed by him only for the purpose of instruction and reformation. Of this kind he reckons the torments which the damned in hell will suffer. * * * * From which we discover, that Clemens was of the same opinion as his scholar Origen, who every where teaches, that all the punishments of those in hell are purgatorial, that they are not endless," &c. Dallœi *De Usu Patrum*. Lib. II. cap. IV. Archbishop Potter teaches the same respecting Clemens.

4. Sparks, in his *Inquiry*, page 351, says : "Universalism was a favourite tenet with the great and learned Origen ; and it is frequently mentioned in the writings both of the earlier and later Christian fathers. Some avow it to be their faith, and others introduce such allusions as to show that it was a tenet common to many Christians at the time they wrote."

Thus sir, I think I have shown to the satisfaction of all that Universalism did exist before the

days of Origen. And now, I desire to know from whence it was derived? Not from the Jews for they believed in endless misery; and not from the Heathens for they also believed this. It must therefore have been derived from the Savior and his apostles.

Respecting Origen's excommunication, I must offer a few words, though you have given no reply to what was said on this, in letter No. VIII. where I have shown that he was not excommunicated for heresy. Eusebius says, "Demetrius seeing him doing well, great and illustrious and celebrated among all, was overcome by human infirmity, and wrote against him to the bishops throughout the world, and attempted to traduce what he had done as a most absurd act, (referring to his practical application of Matt. 19. 12.) Then as the most distinguished bishops of Palestine, and those of Cesarea and Jerusalem, judged Origen worthy of the first and highest honor, they ordained him to the presbytery by the imposition of hands. He advanced, therefore at this time to great reputation, and obtained a celebrity among all men, and no little renown for his virtue and wisdom: but Demetrius, though he had no other charge to urge than that act, which was done while but a boy, raised a violent accusation against him. He attempted, also, to involve those in his accusations, who had elevated him to the presbytery. Cruse's Eusebius pp. 226, 227.

Your quotation from Mosheim stating that Origen's excommunication met the approval of the bishops, is unfair in the extreme; for the very next words which follow, Mosheim says, 'the

bishops of Achia, Palestine, Phœnicia and Arabia declared their highest displeasure against it. Furthermore, in one year from this Demetrius died, and with him all opposition to Origen. And after this Origen was again appointed to explain the scriptures at Cesarea and the bishops of Palestine often sat under his instructions as though he were their master." Thus is it evident that Origen's sentiments were no cause of his excommunication. I will only add, many of the doctrines which you have attributed to him, it is doubtful whether he ever held; others he held only as speculative opinions, as some partialists do the opinion, that hell is in one of the comets, and that its torments consist in changes from extreme heat to extreme cold, caused by the comet coming near the sun and then flying off into the unknown regions of space.

Your concluding remarks respecting our order are exceedingly illiberal, unjust and uncandid. Your hackneyed charge about diversity of opinion has twice been thrown back upon your own cause. That relative to my violent treatment of Chauncy is wholly incorrect. So also is the one which declares that no man among us holds the same opinions for one month together. As it respects the changes of Universalism, I fearlessly assert that they have neither been as numerous or great within sixty-five years, as those of partialism. For the infidelity of Kneeland, I could find a dozen offsets among partialists; but such things are not proof, and my Master has forbidden me to render railing for railing.

Your postscript contains but a lame apology for your false statement respecting Mr. Whittemore's

opinion about angels. You must have a treacherous memory indeed, if you had read his notes on the Parables with any degree of attention, not to know, that the Christian Spectator asserted what was absolutely false. The error into which you have fallen in this instance, should teach you caution in quoting the testimony of bigoted, sectarian partialists against Universalism.

Mr. Whittemore's work on the Parables is one of great merit and utility, and it should be in the hands of every biblical student; for it contains a vast fund of useful matter, respecting the manners, customs and laws of our Saviour's day, besides copious extracts from standard orthodox commentators, showing that his explanations have their sanction. Whether your 'surprise and disgust, will outweigh their testimony, is not for me to say. Having pointed out in this, and in letter No. VIII. numerous other false statements, I will add nothing further.

I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. XIII.

BALTIMORE, March 13, 1835.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

Dear Sir—It is necessary that I should make some remarks on your *eighth* letter, and on that part of it in particular which relates to the term *Gehenna*. Every attentive reader must be aware that I have demonstrated the certainty of endless misery by the word

Gehenna, as used in the New Testament; but lest some doubts should remain on the mind of any one, I shall consider it more particularly. Your twelve facts, as you are pleased to call them, I consider to be nothing but twelve miserable subterfuges: the first four are founded on a falsehood, viz. that *Gehenna* is used in the Old Testament, and the other eight have no direct bearing on the subject. Your asserting that *apokteino* 'to kill,' in Matt. x. 28, means to 'torture,' 'torment,' and that in direct contradiction to Parkhurst, Bass, and Grove, is one of the most barefaced absurdities I have seen, and shows to what lengths a man will go, rather than acknowledge himself in error. Your pretended illustrations of the texts where *Gehenna* is used, I consider to be perversions and misapplications which go much farther to darken and confuse than to explain and elucidate. Your assertion, that the discourse attributed to Josephus is universally considered the work of some Christian of the second or third century, whether taken from a Boston or Baltimore or any other work, I consider to be an impudent forgery, carrying its own refutation in its front. This is one among the many lies and falsehoods invented and propagated by the Universalists to injure the truth and establish error. In confirmation of this, I shall observe that Mr. Whiston, the translator of Josephus's works, says of the discourse on Hades, in a note (*Balt. edit.* 1333, 8 vo. page 458) 'Of these Jewish or Essene, and indeed, Christian doctrines concerning souls, both good and bad, in Hades, see that excellent discourse or homily of Josephus,

concerning Hades, at the end of the work.”— This note proves that the translator attributes the discourse to Josephus, and that he considers it as containing the sentiments of the Jews respecting a future state of happiness and misery. Here then is direct testimony in favour of my sentiment, and as long as this one exists your position must be false.

Your saying that the Targums furnish no proof whatever, that *Gehenna* was used to signify endless woe, in the days of Christ, is another erroneous statement, and contrary to the opinion of the most learned men.

But the most absurd assertion, perhaps, in all your letters, is that wherein you declared^d that the opinion that the Targums of Jonathan and Onkelos were written in the second or third century, had the sanction of the most eminent writers. Whether you declared this, as a deliberate falsehood, which had been propagated by others to deceive, or through ignorance of the true state of the matter, I am unable to determine; but shall incline to the charitable side. As I consider it of the utmost importance to prove that the Targums, which use *Gehenna* as I do, were written before the time of Christ, I shall lay before you the following testimony on the subject, which settles the matter beyond dispute.

1. *Luesden*, in his ‘*Philologicus Hebreo-Mixtus*’ (p. 44, edit. 1673,) says that, ‘In the time of *Hercanus*, about forty years before Christ, *Onkelos*, author of the Targum, became a proselyte to the Jewish religion.’ Again, (p. 50,) ‘*Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, the Targumist, was one

of the *eighty* renowned disciples of the celebrated *Hillel*. That *Jonathan* translated the prophets is believed and asserted by the Jews.'

2. *Hottinger*, in his *Thesaurus Philologicus* (p. 557, 558, ed. 1649,) says, '*Onkelos*, whose Targum on the Pentateuch was so celebrated, was contemporary with *Gamaliel*, who was the instructor of Paul.' And again, (p. 259) '*Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, author of the Targum on the prophets, was a disciple of the renowned *Hillel*.'

3. *Brewster*, in his *Encyclopædia* (*Phil. ed.* 1832, *Art. Theology*) says, 'But the most decided evidence on this subject (the doctrine of the Trinity) is to be found in the Targums of *Jonathan* and *Onkelos*, the one being a commentary on the prophets, the other on the books of Moses. They are both written in Chaldee; that of *Jonathan*, according to Calmet, about *thirty* years before Christ; that of *Onkelos* not long after it, and they are both, till this day, held in the highest estimate among the Jews.'

4. *The Edinburg Encyclopædia*, (*Phil. ed.* 1798. *Art. Targum*,) states that, 'the Hebrews had no written paraphrases or Targums before the era of *Onkelos* and *Jonathan*, who lived about the time of our Saviour. *Jonathan* is placed about *thirty* years before Christ, under the reign of Herod the Great. *Onkelos* is the most of all esteemed, and copies are to be found, in which it is inserted verse for verse with the Hebrew. * * * These Targums are of great use for the better understanding not only of the Old Testament, on which they are written, but also of the New.'

5. *Hartwell Horne*, in his introduction to 'A

Critical study of the Scriptures,' says, (*vol. 2. p. 159, Phil. ed. 1825.*) 'The generally received opinion is, that *Onkelos* was a proselyte to Judaism, and a disciple of the celebrated *Rabbi Hillel*, who flourished about *fifty* years before the Christian era: and consequently that he was contemporary with our Saviour. The Targum of Onkelos comprises the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, and is justly preferred to all others, both by Jews and Christians, on account of the purity of its style, and its general freedom from idle legends.' Again, (*p. 160.*) 'According to the Talmudical traditions, *Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, author of the Targum, was chief of the *eighty* disciples of *Rabbi Hillel* the elder, and a fellow disciple of Simeon the Just, who bore the infant Messiah in his arms; consequently he would be nearly contemporary with Onkelos. Wolfins, however is of opinion that he flourished a short time before the birth of Christ, and compiled the work which bears his name from more ancient Targums, that had been preserved to his time by oral tradition.'

6. *The American Encyclopædia*, (*Phil. ed. 1832, Art. Targum*.) states, that 'the oldest Targum is that of Onkelos, which comprises only the *Pentateuch*, the second one that of *Jonathan*, is a version of the prophets. These are supposed to have been written about the time of our Saviour.'

7. *Dr. Clarke*, in the general preface to his Commentary, (*p. 1.*) says, 'Perhaps the most ancient comments of this (explanatory) kind, were the Chaldee Paraphrases or Targums, particularly those of Onkelos on the law, and

Jonathan on the prophets; the former written a short time before the Christian era, the latter about *fifty* years after the Incarnation. These comments are rather glosses on words, than an exposition of things; and the former is little more than a *verbal* translation of the Hebrew text in pure *Chaldee*.'

8. *Buck*, in his Theological Dictionary, (*Art. Targum*,) says, 'But though the custom of making these sorts of expositions in the Chaldee language, be very ancient among the Hebrews, yet they have no written paraphrases or Targums before the era of *Onkelos* and *Jonathan*, who lived about the time of our Saviour. *Jonathan* is placed about *thirty* years before Christ, under the reign of Herod the Great. *Onkelos* is something more modern.'

9. *Prideaux*, in his Connexions of the Old and New Testaments, (*vol. 2, Balt. edit. 1833, p. 343*,) says, 'As the Targum of *Onkelos* is the first in order of place, as being on the Pentateuch, which is the first part of the holy scriptures, so, I think, it is not to be doubted but that it is the first also in order of time, and the most ancient that was written of all that are now extant. The Jewish writers, though they allow him to have been, for some time of his life, contemporary with *Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, the author of the second Targum above mentioned, yet make him much the younger of the two; for they tell us that *Jonathan* was one of the prime scholars of *Hillel*, who died about the time when our Saviour was born, but that *Onkelos* survived *Gamaliel* the elder, Paul's master, (who was the grandson of *Hillel*, and

died not till eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem,) for they relate that Onkelos assisted at the funeral of this Gamaliel, provided for it seventy pounds of frankincense at his own charge.' Again, (page 351) 'Whether the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan were received for this use (the explanation of the Hebrew text) so early as our Saviour's time, I cannot say; but this seems certain, if not these particular Targums, yet some others were then in hands for the instruction of the people, and were read among them in private as well as in public, for this purpose, and that they had such not only on the law and the prophets, but also on all the other Hebrew scriptures. * * * And when Christ was called out to read the second lesson in the synagogue of Nazareth, of which he was a member, he seems to have read it out of a Targum.'

10. *Robinson*, in his edition of *Calmet's Dictionary*, (*Boston*, 1832, *Art. Versions*,) says, 'The Chaldee translations were already in use, in the time of Christ, as is apparent from *Mat. xxvii. 46*, among other passages, where the words are quoted according to the Chaldee version. * * * Onkelos, author of the Targum containing the Pentateuch, was, most probably a pupil of Hillel, the grandfather of Gamaliel, Paul's instructor. * * * Jonathan Ben Uzziel, author of the Targum on the historical books and prophets, lived a short time before the birth of Christ.'

11. In the *Treasury of Knowledge*, (*p. 106*, *part 3*, *New York ed. 1834*,) under the head 'Versions of the Scriptures' I find the following

account of the Targums: 'The Chaldee Paraphrases or Targums, so called, are translations of the Scriptures into the Chaldean language.

The *Targum of Onkelos*, who is generally supposed to be a disciple of Rabbi Hillel, who flourished about 50 years before the Christian era.

The *Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, who was contemporary with Onkelos, and also with our Saviour.'

12. The *editors* of the Comprehensive Bible, in their introduction (*p. 69, Hartford ed. 1832,*) say, 'The Targum of Onkelos, who is generally supposed to be a disciple of Rabbi Hillel, who flourished about 50 years before the Christian era, comprises the Pentateuch, and is nearly a verbal translation of the Hebrew text into pure Chaldee.

The *Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel*, who was contemporary with Onkelos, and also with our Saviour, is a paraphrase on the prophets from Ezra to Ezekiel inclusive, and approaches nearer to Onkelos in purity of style, especially in the former prophets, than any of the other Targums.'

On these *twelve* extracts, in relation to the dates of the Targums, I have to make a few remarks in order to set the subject under consideration in a more luminous point of view.

1. The Targums are commentaries or paraphrases on the Hebrew scriptures, designed to convey the true sense of the text to the common people. As the Jewish people, during the Babylonish captivity, had forgotten the Hebrew language, and made use of the Chaldee, it was

necessary that these paraphrases should be made, not in the Hebrew, but in the Chaldee language.

2. These Targums or commentaries, whether oral or written, were in use soon after the Jews returned from Babylon to their native land; and the written Targums of Jonathan and Onkelos were composed some time before the Incarnation.

3. The word *Gehenna* is used, in these Targums, to signify *everlasting fire*, or the punishment of the wicked, by fire, in a future state, in all the following places: Gen. iii. 24; and xv. 17; Psal. cxl. 12; Isa. xxvi. 15; xxxiii. 14; xxxiv. 14. As the revelation of God to mankind was committed to the Jews, and as the inspired prophets were raised up among them, and lived among them, it is absolutely certain that, no people had a better right to understand the true meaning of the sacred text than they.

4. Our Lord being a Jew, according to the flesh, and reading the Targarus, in which *Gehenna* is used to signify endless burnings, in the synagogue and elsewhere, as is believed, he must have used the word, in his discourses, not for the valley of Jerusalem, but for everlasting burnings, in a future state. That any one should pretend to doubt this, for it is only pretension, is of all things most astonishing.

5. In all cases of dispute respecting the meaning of a word, an appeal must be made to dictionaries and lexicons. I have done this, in my *eighth* letter, I cited *twelve* authorities who all concur in saying *Gehenna* means *everlasting fire*,

in a future state. I there stated that, if you could produce half the number who say it does not mean future wo, I would give it up: but you could not produce one single author to sustain your views. What am I to do in this case? I appeal to the judgment of the public to decide, whether I have not finally settled the argument in dispute. I am satisfied I have, and if any defect can be produced, I pledge myself to set it straight.

To sum up the whole matter in a few words, it may be observed that, the word *Gehenna* occurs *twelve* times in the New Testament. It is derived from *Ghi, a valley*, and *Hinnom*, the name of a person, who once possessed it; and signifies *hell-fire*. In this sense it was used by the authors of the Targums before our Saviour's time, and consequently by the Jews generally, as is manifest by Mr. Whiston's note concerning Hades. This is the sense in which *Gehenna* was explained to the Gentile converts about the year 150, by Justin Martyr. And in fact, no one, I believe, ever called in question or denied this explanation of *Gehenna* till within these late years, when the demoralizing heresy of Universalism began to stalk through the land with brazen effrontery.

Now sir, I shall consider the question as finally settled, and so it must remain, till you prove by sufficient authority, that the Targums were not written about the time of Christ, and this you cannot do till the last trumpet shall sound.

Now let me address myself to such as have been led away from the truth of Holy Scrip-

ture, by the art and cunning of designing men, for such I consider all those who use sophistical reasoning to propagate a doctrine which was unknown in the days of Christ and his apostles. Fellow Christians, we are all hastening to eternity, to the judgment seat of Christ, before whom we must all shortly appear. We have the Holy Scriptures to teach us our duty to God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves. These scriptures teach us, in clear terms, all the doctrines of God, so far as he has revealed them to mankind. Every enquiring mind, by a little attention to the Bible, may see that the doctrine of endless punishment is as clearly revealed as that of endless happiness. The Jews unquestionably understood the Bible to teach the doctrine of endless misery. Christ and his apostles taught this doctrine, and Justin Martyr, in the second century, taught the same; and, in fact, no man ever taught the doctrine of a Universal restoration till Origen broached the sentiment about the year 206; consequently, it was unknown in the days of the apostles. You have more than five hundred passages of scripture that cannot be reconciled with the doctrine. But, supposing the doctrine is true, you can lose nothing in a future state by believing in the eternity, of hell's torments; for the mere belief of the doctrine of endless misery will not make it endless, unless it really is so. Therefore, if I am in error, my error will have no bad consequence, if Universalism be true, but the Universalists will be awfully disappointed, if their doctrine turn out to be false. Consequently, we should use every possible means to prepare

for the worst. We are all sinners before the Almighty God, and his word teaches that we must repent of sin, believe in Jesus Christ with a heart unto righteousness, be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and live a life of obedience and love to God, doing good to mankind as far as possible. All those who pursue this course, and those alone, have the word and oath of *him* who cannot lie, to secure to them eternal life and happiness beyond the grave.

Now sir, the question being settled, beyond the possibility of a doubt on the subject, I shall let the matter rest. But, if you shall produce any thing, by way of objections to what I have stated, bearing any marks of plausibility, I am ready to shew their fallacy.

Your's, &c.

JOSEPH M'KEE.

LETTER No. XIII.

BALTIMORE, April 2, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph M'Kee:

Dear Sir—You have a singular propensity for asserting, that 'you have incontrovertibly proved your positions.' Hence your present letter is commenced by declaring, that you have 'demonstrated the eternity of misery, by the word *Gehenna*.'—It is well sir, to keep up the appearance of courage and success, but really, when every argument which you have adduced has been fully noticed, and when you have attempted a reply to only two or three of

an assertion smacks quite too much of mock confidence, to have the credit of sincerity. It is true, you have backed it up by asserting that my twelve facts in letter No. 8, are 'twelve miserable subterfuges,' that my 'criticism on *apokteino* is in direct opposition to Parkhurst,' [Not so, I gave Parkhurst as one of my authorities, Donnegan as another,] and one of the most barefaced absurdities you ever saw,' &c., all of which is very *charitable*, very *argumentative*! And *such* is the *proof* by which you have demonstrated, that *Gehenna* overthrows Universalism!

The first four of my twelve facts, you assert, 'are founded on a falsehood viz. that *Gehenna* is used in the Old Testament.' Doubtless the reader supposes, I have here committed some egregious blunder, or told some daring lie, for this your language implies.

But what is the fact? Why in the Old Testament, *Gehenna* is written *Gehinnom*. Thus because the word is differently written in the New, from what it is in the Old Testament, I am accused of falsehood! It is the same word, only written *Gehenna* instead of *Gehinnom*! And such are the *arguments* by which the falsity of my twelve facts is shown! But sir, according to this logic, *Gehenna* does not occur in Jonathan's Targum, for there it is written *Hinnom*; so that if what I asserted be false, you must yield the Targums.

This play upon the word *Gehenna* is in perfect keeping with the charge that what I said respecting the discourse in Josephus on *Hades*, is 'an *impudent forgery*,' and 'one among the

many *lies* and *falsehoods*, invented and propagated by Universalists, to *injure the truth* and *establish error*.' But that I am correct is evident from the following considerations:

1. This discourse is not in Hudson's Critical edition of Josephus, of which Horne (*vol. 2, p. 306,*) thus speaks:

'Those distinguished Bibliographers, Fabricius, Harwood, Harles, and Oberthur, are unanimous in their commendations of this elegant and most valuable edition.' He also says, 'Dr. Hudson seems to have consulted every known manuscript and edition. The correctness of the Greek text, the judgment displayed in the annotations, the utility of the indexes, and the consummate knowledge which is evinced of the history and antiquity of the time, render this work deserving of everything said in commendation of it.'

2. It is the same work which the learned quote under the following titles: 'Concerning the cause of the Universe;' 'Concerning the Universe;' 'Concerning the Universal Cause;' 'Concerning Universal Nature.' This discourse is barely alluded to in the *Prefatio* (written by Antonius Hallius, for Hudson did not live to publish his edition) to Hudson's Edition, among the pieces falsely ascribed to Josephus; and then Fabricius is quoted, who says, (*Bibliotheca Græca, Art. De Josepho et ejus Scriptis, § 8,*) that Dodwell and others attribute it to Caius or Hippolytus, two Christian fathers of the end of the 2d or beginning of the 3d century. Du Pin (*Bibliotheca Patrum, vol. 1, Art. Caius,*) says, that Photius, the most learned and accurate critic in ecclesiastical affairs of my arguments on this subject, I do think, such

all antiquity after Eusebius, attributes to Caius, 'The treatise of the Universe,' or of the 'Nature of the Universe,' or of the causes thereof, which went in his time under the name of Josephus.' Photius lived in the 8th century. Du Pin also observes (*Ibid.*) that Photius says, 'some had attributed the piece to Irenaus, some to Justin Martyr, and that it had no author's name affixed to it.' Photius says too, 'that Caius in one of his works remarked, 'that he was the author of the Book concerning the nature of the Universe.' This same book is set down in the catalogue of Hippolytus' works, taken from an ancient Roman marble, dug up near Rome in 1551. See Du Pin (*Biblioth. Patr. vol. 1 Art. Hippolytus.*)

3. The 'Discourse concerning Hades,' is I believe never quoted by any respectable critic as Josephus's; nor is it made use of, by those who have carefully sifted Josephus, to get every particle of evidence he affords, concerning the Jewish notions of a future state, the Messiah, and the several subjects of which this discourse treats.

4. No one can carefully read this discourse, without being satisfied, from its general tenor and language, that it was written by some one familiar with the New Testament, and that many passages, especially of St. Paul are referred to; and that, in one word, the author wrote in the character of a Christian, expecting and meaning to be so understood. If so, he certainly was not Josephus.

From the foregoing proofs, the reader can judge whether any reliance can be placed on

the Discourse concerning Hades; and whether my assertion respecting it is a *forgery* and a falsehood. Surely you betray unpardonable ignorance on this subject, to make such charges. Thus we see that the Discourse concerning Hades prove nothing respecting Gehenna.

I will now proceed to notice the dates of the Targums. That these are a matter of critical conjecture, I am willing to admit. And this none can dispute, for some have supposed that they were written before Christ, and some as late as A. D. 700 or 800. Now to say that books of such uncertain dates, determine for a certainty the meaning of Gehenna, is surely highly unreasonable.

And even were I not a Universalist, I should require some stronger proof, than has ever yet been given, before they could outweigh in my mind, the declaration of Christ, that the 'damnation of Gehenna' should come on the generation to which he spake. Why have you not answered this argument? Why have you passed it in entire silence? On *this* generation shall the *damnation of hell* come! 'This generation shall not pass away till Christ come,' Matt. xxiv. 34. 'There be some standing here which shall not taste death till they see the Son of man come.' Matt. xvi. 27. This damnation of Gehenna, then, was to come at the destruction of Jerusalem. You may as well reason against your own existence, as against this fact. Besides, this was the figure by which the prophets foretold it. But sir, to say nothing of these arguments, the simple fact, that only the Jews and those connected with their nation, were threatened with Gehenna; that it is not men-

tioned in the Gospel of John, who wrote for the Gentiles, not in his epistles, not in all the writings of Paul, not in the epistles of Peter or Jude, and not in the book of Revelations,—I say this simple fact, outweighs all that you have said, or by the aid of Targums can say, on *Gehenna*. Because, if it had signified a future hell, the Gentiles would have been threatened with it. But these arguments are only three out of a long catalogue, which I have produced on this subject, and which you have not attempted to answer.

But to the dates of the Targums. As the Targum of Onkelos does not contain the word *Gehenna*, or anything about future punishment, we will confine our remarks to that of Jonathan Ben Uzziel.

1. The *older* critics among the moderns, like Prideaux, generally ascribe it to about the Christian era, on the authority chiefly of Jewish traditions. The same is true of the *English* critics, even down to this day. This will account for the opinions which you have been able to collect. But apart from this, it must be confessed, that some of your authorities are far from being responsible on a critical subject like this. Who would think of quoting Buck, as authority in history or antiquity, or on anything except the single point of the orthodox notions which he held, and with which he was acquainted?—Clarke may be a little more trust-worthy, but he followed the traditions of the Jews on this point. Brewster's, the Edinburgh and the American Encyclopædias are mere compilations, and are never received as responsible

authorities on these or any critical points, and every respectable critic will be greatly surprised, that a man of your pretensions to learning, should quote them. Leusden (who was never distinguished as a judge of such questions, and whose province did not lay within this subject,) and Hottinger were both old authors, who lived before the era of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel had been carefully inquired into. Horne, Calmet, and your other authorities have followed the traditions of the Jews. Hence on page 160 Horne says, 'According to the Talmudical traditions, Jonathan Ben Uzziel was chief of the eighty distinguished scholars of Rabbi Hillel, the elder, and a fellow disciple of Simeon the Just, who bore the infant Messiah in his arms.' I will here add, according to these traditions, Jonathan was contemporary with Malachi, Haggai, and Zechariah, and received his Targum from their lips. Not only so, according to these, while Jonathan was writing his Targum, there was an earthquake for 40 leagues around him, and if any bird happened to pass over him, or a fly alighted on his paper while writing, they were immediately consumed by fire from heaven, without any injury being sustained either by his person or paper. So much for the authority of Jewish traditions; and as these seem to have guided all your authorities on this subject, it shows just how much weight they are entitled to.

2. Let us now examine what a *majority* of the *most eminent* late German critics say on this subject. Higher authority than these cannot be given.

Jahn says, "From this it is evident, that he,

(the author of Jonathan's Targum) must have lived long before the time of the Talmudists, and not as some have supposed, in the 5th or 6th century, since in that case his history would have been better known. * * * We may properly infer, that the work is a collection of the interpretations of several learned men, made towards the close of the 3d century, [N. B. In the preceding instances, Jahn seems to prefer the date of about A. D. 282.] and containing some of a much older date. *Jahn's Introduction to the Old Testament*, Gen. Introduction § 47, page 66.

Eichhorn, who in the beginning of the present century was probably accounted the first Biblical scholar of Germany and of the world, says 'first, that many refer the author of Jonathan Ben Uzziel's Targum, to a period a little before the birth of Christ; 'but,' continues he, 'he certainly lived later. His Targum, to judge by its style, is the work of some Palestine Jew; still the Jerusalem Talmud says nothing of it, any more than do Origen and Jerome. How could it remain unknown to those Talmudists as well as to those Christian fathers, who lived in Palestine, if it were already in circulation in their time? Moreover, it is full of such fables as first gained currency in Palestine at a later period. Finally, in its translation of passages, it strives to conceal all traces of the Messiah in those texts which the Christians applied to him; a manifest proof that the translator lived at a time, when the Christians were already in controversy with the Jews, to say nothing of the circumstance, that a Chaldaic translation

[i. e. Targum,] was not used in the synagogue at so early a period. Even if the Targum on the Chronicles, which mentions the Turks, should not be reckoned to belong to this, still it appears that no Targum on the Prophets [N. B. Jonathan's Targum is on the prophets.] was in use before the 4th century, or rather later.' *Eichhorn's Einleitung in das alte Testament*. Kap. iii. § 226, Band. ii. S. 6364. Gottingen, 1823.

Bertholdt, a contemporary of *Eichhorn*, and one of the most eminent orientalists of the last generation in Germany, after having mentioned Onkelos's Targum says, 'Another Targum on the earlier and later prophets, bears the name of Jonathan, the Son of Uzziel. The Talmud reckons him among the Jerusalem disciples of the aged Hillel; and therewith agrees the tradition of the later Jews, who made him to have flourished 160 years before the destruction of the second temple. According to this reckoning, Jonathan would have been a cotemporary with Onkelos, only somewhat younger. But we cannot possibly carry him back to so early an age. The Talmudists must have confounded a Jonathan, who lived in Palestine in the end of the second or beginning of the third century with the earlier Jonathan. For the Targum which bears Jonathan's name, cannot have been completed before the end of the 2nd century. In it there are texts, (for example *Isai. liii. and lxiii. 1—5,*) universally regarded by the Jews, at the birth of Christ, as prophecies of the Messiah, which are here explained in another manner. This betrays the spirit of

the 2nd century, when the Jews were deeply engaged in controversy with the Christians, and when being pressed, and seeking relief on every hand, they adopted new principles in the explanation of many Old Testament passages. Moreover, the language of Jonathan's Targum, which abounds with foreign words, indicates the second or third century. Later than this however, we cannot place it, for when Morinus and J. Vossius thought it was not composed before the 7th or 8th century, they did not consider that its language is far purer than in the later Targums, or in all the Aramœan writings of this late period.' *Bertholdt's Historisch-critische Einleitung in Schriften des alt. und neu Test.* Zweyter. Th. § 173.

I might mention other German orientalists of reputation, as Bauer, &c. but I will only add, that though Gessenius, a distinguished Hebrew scholar, decides in favour of the earlier date of Jonathan's Targum, placing it about the Christian era, his opinion does not seem to have been considered authoritative in Germany; for Kuinoel, the celebrated commentator on the historical books of the New Testament, in his commentary on John, revised in 1825, since Gessenius advanced his opinion above noticed; Kuinoel, I say, relies on Eichhorn as authority, and quotes the Targums as the work of the 3d or 4th century. And he probably in such a work, took the prevalent opinion of the judges of such questions. *Comment in Evangelium Johan.* Prolegom p. 109. Lips. 1825.

Thus do we see, that the prevalent opinion among the German critics is, that Jonathan's

Targum was written at the close of the 2d or beginning of the 3d century; and no higher authority on this point, can be quoted. Mr. Dwight expressed an universal opinion, when in his travels through Germany, he declared that the Germans in Biblical knowledge, were a century in advance of all the other nations of Europe. Buck, sir, and Encyclopædias, are but the mere echo of a traditional opinion, and are not to be compared with men who have examined for themselves into the merits of this question. And what I say of Buck, I say of nearly all your authorities, excepting Luesden, Hottinger, and some others, who followed the traditions of the Jews on this subject. It is pretty certain, therefore, that this Jonathan who was a disciple of Hillel, was not the Jonathan who wrote the Targum; and that his Targum was written at about the beginning of the 3d century. If so, it proves nothing about the New Testament use of Gehenna.

Before noticing the inferences which you have drawn from your authorities respecting Gehenna, I will introduce a few arguments to show, that the word could not have been used in its present popular sense in the days of Christ. Taking it for granted, that Gehenna in the Old Testament never signifies a place of future torment, we wish to show:

1. That it is not used in this sense in the Apochrypha. Hell occurs in the following places: 2 Esdras ii. 29; iv. 8; viii. 53; Tobit xiii. 2; Wisd. xvii. 14; Eccles. xxi. 10; li. 5, 6. Song of the three children, v. 66. In all these texts, Gehenna is not used. Hades is the word in the

original. Now when we consider that two books of the Apochrypha (Wisdom of Solomon and 2d of Maccabees,) contain allusions to future punishment, but not under the figure of Gehenna, (as the word does not occur in them,) it shows conclusively, that Gehenna retained its etymological use, till near the Christian era, (the time according to Prideaux and Horne, when these two books were composed,) for if it had not, they would, without doubt, have introduced it. Indeed, why not, as well as Jonathan, if he wrote, as you say, his Targum about this time? 2. In all the writings extant at the period between the time of the Old and New Testament, we never find future punishment represented by fire, but uniformly by darkness, night, and death. This shows then, that Gehenna during all this period, retained its etymological sense, and that Jonathan's Targum, could not have been written, when you say, for in that, Gehenna is represented as an abode of fire, and not of darkness. 3. Josephus, whose 'writings bear date between A. D. 70 and A. D. 100, never introduces Gehenna in those passages where he speaks of the state of the wicked after death, nor in any other part of his works.*

The foregoing facts, taken in connexion with what we have proved respecting the date of Jonathan's Targum, show conclusively, to my mind, that as late as A. D. 100, Gehenna retain-

* The facts of these three statements are taken from Balfour's Inquiry, and an Article on Gehenna, by H. Ballou 2nd. published in the Universalist Expositor, vol. ii. No. 12.

ed among the Jews, the sense it has in the Old Testament. And as Christ addressed Jews, he must have used it in the same sense. Otherwise he misled his hearers.

‘From the time of Josephus onwards, there is an interval of about a century, from which no Jewish writings have descended to us. It was a period of dreadful change and ruin with that distracted people. Their body politic was dissolved; the whole system of their ceremonial religion had been crushed in the fall of their city and temple; and they themselves scattered abroad, were accursed on all the face of the earth. In these circumstances, it was natural that their sentiments and usages should undergo a rapid modification; and if we may judge from the state in which we find their doctrine, when their own compositions again appear in view, they adopted almost every conceit, provided it were sufficiently extravagant and ridiculous, that ever crossed the brain of a madman.’* Among these was that of representing hell by Gehenna.

I will now examine the inferences you have drawn from your authorities on the dates of the Targums. Passing over the 1st and 2d inferences which we have proved false, (for if the Targums were not written, they could not have been read in the synagogue at the time you say,) I will consider your 3d inference. Here you have referred to Gen. iii. 24; xv. 17; but Jonath-an has no Targum on this book, or any of the five books of Moses; and Onkelos’s Targum does

* *Art. Gehenna*, by H. Ballou 2nd in *Univer. Expos. vol. 2, No. 12.*

not contain Gehenna or any allusion to future punishment. You have been misled therefore, by the Targum falsely attributed to Jonathan, which is often quoted for authority on Gehenna. Besides, I doubt whether you or any Methodist would pretend that the texts to which you refer, teach endless misery in Gehenna, or any other place. Hence you would differ from the Targums here, and thus oppose in sentiment a people, whom you intimate understood correctly the Bible. But why such an intimation, when you and all Christians believe, that notwithstanding all their privileges, the Jews erred egregiously on some of the leading and most plain doctrines of the Bible?

Your 4th inference being drawn from the dates of the Targums is false; and of course Jesus used Gehenna in the sense of the Old Testament.—Your 5th respecting the 12 Lexicographers appears with an ill grace, when we consider, that the 12 facts which I adduced as an offset, still stand in undisputed strength. Besides these Lexicographers, forming their opinion chiefly on the dates of the Targums were misled here; and before they can be regarded as authority on Gehenna, you must disprove what I have said, respecting the dates of the Targums. Not only so, the testimony of a thousand men, will weigh nothing in my mind, when they thus contradict the language of Jesus, that the *damnation of hell should come on the generation then living*. Your offer to give up the argument, if I would produce six Lexicographers, who say Gehenna does not signify endless misery, is puerile in the extreme. What! a question like this to be de-

cided by vote! This is really sir, a very classical idea. But I have no confidence in these offers, for in a previous instance, you made one respecting *aion*, which I accepted, and demonstrated your error; but you have not had the honor to abide by your voluntary offer.

‘To sum up the whole matter then, in a few words,’ you are entirely mistaken respecting the dates of the Targums, and the sense of Gehenna. Of this, there is not the least imaginable doubt. Your assertion, that Justin Martyr used Gehenna to signify endless wo, is entirely false, for he did not himself believe the doctrine, being an advocate for the annihilation of the wicked. And I defy you or any man to prove, that a single christian father advocated endless misery, before we find Universalism taught in the church. This fact, when we consider that the notion of endless misery prevailed among Jews and Heathens, shows that Christ and the Apostles taught Universalism; for if they did not, how did the christians learn it?

Tertullian, who lived A. D. 200, is thought to have been the first who asserted that misery would be of equal duration with happiness. The Universalists of the present age, therefore, are not the first who denied that Gehenna signified endless misery. Clemens, Origen, Ambrosius, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem, and Theosticus, bishop of Cesarea, denied it; and so did many of the fathers, from the days of Origen down to A. D. 370, among whom were Titus, bishop of Bostra; Basil, bishop of Nyssa, Gregory Nyssen, Didymus and Jerome; to say nothing of the distinguished men in after

ages before and since the reformation. And sir, there is one lesson which I earnestly desire that you and all the partialists of this age may learn from those fathers, who were with you in sentiment. I refer to the fact, that in no instance, did they withdraw their fellowship from Universalists, or give the slightest intimation of unfriendly feeling towards them, until A. D. 390, and even long after this, many of the bishops, who openly avowed it, enjoyed the full communion and fellowship of the church. How does this shame the exclusiveness, the denunciations, and the charge of heresy which Universalists now encounter from their opposers! Alas! times have sadly changed! Even you sir, with all your pretended liberality, cannot write a letter without interlarding it with *heresy, heretic, here-siarch*, and without accusing me of *deliberate* falsehoods.

From the conclusion of your letter I judge, that you have nearly exhausted your stock of argument. With all the cant and farcical solemnity of a stupid fanatic, you assume the character of a whining exhorter, like a bigoted old lady, with whom I once conversed. After I had disposed of all the arguments which she could muster, she said, with a sigh, 'I do not wish to argue any longer, but I wish to exhort and warn you of your danger.' And so with you; after having every argument, which you can adduce, promptly answered, you turn to warning and exhorting!

Not only so, you bring in the childish argument of a *double chance*, as though God will damn Universalists for believing him infinitely

good, or as though a belief in endless wo is essential to salvation, or as though the tendency of cruelty is better than that of love. Had you been just, you would have credited your double chance argument to the builders of Babel, for they, fearing that God might lie, thought it best to be on the safe side, and have a tower on which to go up, in case the promise of God should fail. You, with other partialists, are endeavouring to erect a Babel, on which you can climb to heaven, but you have already been cursed with confusion of tongues; for you agree on no point except that Universalists are heretics, and will be damned.

I am, &c.

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. XIV.

Baltimore, April. 10, 1835.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner.

Dear Sir—I do not consider it necessary to bring forward any more of the hundreds of arguments which I have in store, to prove the eternity of future punishment, as the question is unanswerably settled in my last letter. However, it may not be amiss to notice some of your *unfounded charges* and evasions.

In your second letter you charge me with making imperfect quotations from Lexicons; but the matter swells as you get along; for, in your *ninth* letter you do not hesitate to say I *perverted* authorities, with allusion to the same thing. In the introduction to your letter, you use the words ‘perversion,’ ‘perverted,’ ‘perverting,’ eight times

in reference to the same thing,' instead of producing an *instance* of perversion. This line of conduct shows that your arguments consist in assertions rather than proof. You go on and say, "Let us consider the eleven texts where *aion* is not governed by *eis*." But what follows? Six texts only, out of eleven are touched at: the other five are passed in silence! You go on and say, "I deny that *aion* in the singular, when governed by *eis* is endless in the following texts." Then follow twenty-five references including *three* of the texts in dispute! One of these texts which you say is not endless is, 2 John 2. "For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us and shall be with us forever." Now it is manifest, that, if the truth shall not be with us to eternity, it will leave us, or we shall be separated from it; and this can take place in only one of two ways, (viz.) we shall be annihilated, or be abandoned to delusion and falsehood, either of which destroys the doctrine of Universalism. Who would have thought that Mr. Skinner denied the doctrine of Universalism. The same argument, precisely, can be drawn from 1 Pet. i. 23, 25, for the same word *aphthartos*, which is applied to the resurrection body, 1 Cor. xv. 52, is applied to the word of God, so that if the word does not mean endless, when employed to express the duration of God's word, neither does it mean endless when applied to the bodies of the saints. The word *aion* in 1 John ii. 17, must mean endless duration; as it is set in contrast with this world. The latter is said to pass away, but the former abideth forever.

You say I perverted or garbled Dr. Maclaine's

note, taken from Mosheim. I do not know what you mean by perverting the views of an author. If you mean that I have given something not to be found in the author quoted, it is your business to detect the matter; but, this you have not done. If you mean by the word 'perversion' that I have not given *all* the author has said on the subject, then, I admit I have perverted every author I quoted, and our blessed Saviour, and the writers of the New Testament did the same, for in quoting from the Old Testament, they did not quote all that was written on the subject of discussion.

I did suspect some of your citations to be forgeries, nor has my suspicion been removed. I did not call on you for *dates* or *editions* of Lexicons as you have more than once pretended, but I called on you for the page and dates of other authors, which you cited to set aside the views of some of the most learned men. One of these occurred in your second letter. There you say, "Rev. E. S. Goodwin * * * says, that Aristotle never uses *aion* as signifying eternity, but as denoting *being, life, existence*, without denoting their duration." You have given me no reference in this case; therefore, I have nothing but your assertion. Whereas, Dr. Clarke affirms that Aristotle says *aion* does properly mean *always being* or *eternity*. *Com. on Gen.* xxi. 33. You have given names by the parcel, without any reference to their works; as, *Homer, Hesiod, Eschylus, Pinder, Hippocrates, Whilby, Grotius, Macknight, Hammond, Pearce, Lightfoot, Cappe, &c.* One instance of this in a controversy might be endured, but a continual course of this sort is intolerable; and certainly does not

merit the slightest attention. You insinuate that all the writers except Universalists belong to my church, and that you might as well quote Murray, Winchester, Ballou, Balfour, Rayner, Streetter and Whittemore, as that I should quote Henry, Clarke, &c. Now sir, the fact is, I never quoted any author belonging to the church that I am connected with, unless they and myself be considered as members of the general church of Christ. But this is not the case with you, for you had recourse to the works of Hosea Ballou, who is known to be the mouthpiece of the Universalists. Now, it must be obvious that you were hard pushed when you were driven to use the works of such men as Ballou and Balfour, and the editors of the *Universalist Expositor*. Besides, these men have led you into inextricable difficulties and errors. See, for instance, the unsupported assertion concerning the Discourse on Hades, and the failure to prove that Universalism existed before the time of Origen. Your quoting the *Ancient History of Universalism* to prove that the doctrine in question had an existence before the days of Origen, is nothing but the assertion of one of the Universalists of the present day. I want historical evidence of these matters, and not the unsupported assertions of self-interested men, for this is of no higher authority than that of Mr. Skinner himself.

I perceive by your *Thirteenth* letter, that you have entirely failed in establishing your position respecting the dates of the Targums. You state "Kuinoel, I say, relies on Eichhorn as authority, and quotes the Targams as the work of the 3rd or 4th century." Now this quotation contains

two literary frauds, or falsehoods. For, *first*, Kuinoel does not rely on Eichhorn as authority concerning the dates of the Targums at all; nor does he, *second*, quote the Targums as the work of the 3rd or 4th century. But I will state what Kuinoel does say on this subject, and then it will be seen that he decidedly establishes my side of the question. Kuinoel in his prolegomena, gives us a dissertation on the *Logos*, and in page 109 he cites the Targums to show what were the Jews' opinion, on this subject, at the time of Christ. He then goes on to say, that admitting the Targums were (which he by no means admits) not written till the second or third century, it made no difference; as the Jews were extremely tenacious of their opinions, so that whatever sentiments or opinions they once held, they always held. In a note, at the bottom of the page, he refers to Eichhorn as one who had offered some trifling reasons to show that the Targums were not written till the 3d or 4th century.—Hence Kuinoel is decidedly in favour of the notion that the Targums were written before Christ; at all events, that they contain the notions which the Jews always had. Consequently the Targums prove that the Jews and our Saviour used *Gehenna* to signify *endless* fire, in a future state. Furthermore, as you have referred to Kuinoel as being of high authority, I suppose you will abide by his decision concerning the meaning of the term *Gehenna*, in the New Testament. Then, if you will turn to his Exposition of Matth. v. 22, (page 135,) you will find that, after remarking that it is derived from two words signifying the valley of the son of Hinnom, he affirms it

signifies, in the New Testament, *the place of everlasting damnation!* Again, on Matt. x. 28, (page 299) he says, *apokteino* means not only to deprive of life, but to destroy or extirpate. Therefore he is decidedly against your sentiments on these three points of difference between us.

Now as I have shown that you misrepresented this author, which is the only one I had access to, it is very likely this would be the case with all you have quoted, had I the opportunity of examining them.

Now having demonstrated the existence of endless misery, by the word Gehenna, any other discussion on the subject is unnecessary, as it is only a useless waste of time. I have shown by *twelve* authorities that the Targums were written before Christ. These Targums use the word *Gehenna* to signify endless misery, and consequently, show how the Jews used the word; and our Lord being a Jew according to the flesh, and preaching to Jews must have used this word as they understood it, therefore, its meaning in the New Testament is definitely fixed. I cited *twelve* authorities to prove it signifies future punishment. No authority can be found to say it does not. Therefore the question is finally settled; for, if it is not, there is no use in debating upon any subject whatever.

It may be observed that I have made no attempt to reply to any of your positive proofs of Universalism, because all such proofs must be explained in accordance with the existence of endless misery; that is, to harmonize with the existence of a fact which is demonstrated.

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

LETTER No. XIV.

Baltimore, April 15th, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph McKee:

Dear Sir—Your oft repeated assertions, that you have ‘gained the point,’ ‘demonstrated the eternity of misery,’ ‘overthrown Universalism,’ and ‘unanswerably settled the question,’ betray a sense of the weakness of your cause, and of the impossibility of sustaining it by proofs that are even satisfactory to yourself. For if it were not so, you would be willing that your arguments should speak for themselves. That such assertions may satisfy the ignorant, is possible; but by all who read and judge for themselves, they will be regarded as the piteous attempts of mortified pride and disappointed ambition, to conceal your defeat, and to keep up the appearance of confidence and success. If it be not so, why do you try to prop up by other proofs, what you assert has been already unanswerably settled?

Your question about garbled quotations, is entirely gratuitous, for you knew, that by these I meant, giving so much of an author’s language as would suit your purpose, and make him speak what he never intended. The instances in which you did this, I have *twice* pointed out, and yet you have the hardihood to say, I have given no instance!

Your allusions to my criticisms on *aion* are like the faint breathings of expiring nature. Suppose I only considered six out of eleven cases where you said *aion* was endless, when not governed

by *eis*? This destroyed your argument, because that rested entirely on the idea, that it is oftener used in an endless than a limited sense.

Your remarks on 2 John 2, are incorrect, because the apostle was speaking of the truth abiding in Christians, and of their walking in it, in opposition to going after false doctrines, which shows that he simply meant, they would always walk in the truth. Thus the Psalmist says (XLVIII. 14,) 'This God is our God forever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death.' The circumstances under which *aphthartos* is used in 1 Pet. i. 23. are entirely different from what they are in 1 Cor. xv. 52. In the latter case, it relates to the immortal state, and in the former, to the gospel, which was designed for the instruction of man in this world. 1 John ii. 17, being a contrast between the permanency of the word and things sensual, requires no illustration.

You deny calling for the dates of Lexicons. Let the reader turn to letter No. 9, and he will see that in speaking of Lexicons, speaking too in reply to my charge respecting perverting their meaning, you say, 'in citing authorities, I wish you to give both the date and place where the book was printed,' &c. Not a word in that letter is said respecting commentators!

You accuse me of giving commentators 'by the parcel' without referring to dates. The charge is wrong(--)in every instance I have said, 'see *Com. in loc.*,' the same as you have done in quoting Henry, Clarke, and Wesley. Rev. E. S. Goodwin, I said, informs us, that Homer, Hesiod, &c. do not use *aion* in the endless sense, but to signify spiritual existence. Could I then in refer-

ing thus to these men, give the dates of their works? You did not give the date of Aristotle, when you told us what Clarke said of him. Such is your inconsistency. Goodwin lived in Sandwich, Mass., and published his criticism on *aion* in the Christian Examiner.

You deny quoting from your own commentators when both Wesley and Clarke were Methodists; and you falsely charge me with saying all I have quoted from are Methodists. Produce the place. You say too, I have been misled by Hosea Ballou, when I had not referred to his works.—Do you imagine that such measures will weaken the argument drawn from the fact, that my application of scripture is sustained by orthodox writers? As well might you attempt to silence ‘the noise of many waters.’

Your remarks respecting H. Ballou 2d, who was the editor of the *Expositor*, and author of the *Ancient History of Universalism*, show your utter destitution of candor and fairness. I doubt whether you have read his history, and yet you denounce it as partial and incorrect. But all this you must do, or admit the antiquity of Universalism. When you have replied to what I have proved respecting the Discourse concerning Hades, it will be time to talk of my being hard pushed, for relying on the statements of H. Ballou 2d as published in the *Expos.* vol. II., No. 12.

The arguments by which I established my positions respecting the Targums, drawn from Jahn, Eichhorn, Bertholdt, the first critics of the world, you meet by simply asserting, that they prove nothing. To this Sir, the reader must bow in submission. The naked assertion of Rev. Jo-

seph M'Kee, puts to flight the whole army of German critics! Keeping in remembrance your quotation from Maclaine, I call for the language of Kuinoel, sustaining what you have said respecting my misrepresenting his views. Charges of this nature, must be *proved*. But if I had even mistaken Kuinoel's opinion, it would not materially affect the argument; neither would it justify your ungenerous inference, that all my quotations from German critics are false! Sooner than be tied to a cause, which requires such low and despicable means for support, I would scornfully throw it to the moles and bats. Kuinoel's assertion that the Targums contain the notions which the Jews always believed, is refuted by the facts of my last. Your dragging in his opinion about *Gehenna* and *apokteino* only shows, that you are determined to prop up by great names, what you cannot support by argument.

You have quite a summary way of settling my positive proofs of Universalism; but Sir, as others may not admit that you have proved all you assert, I am induced to offer a few more arguments on this subject.

1. The scriptures assert that God is infinitely good. David says, "God is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all the works of his hands." An Apostle says, "God is love." Now you admit, that it is the disposition of goodness to communicate happiness—as we read "love worketh no ill--herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son; &c. God so loved the world, that he sent his Son," &c. In the infinity and nature of goodness then, we find an unanswerable argument against Cal-

vinism, for if God be alike good to all, and goodness works no ill, he certainly could decree no man to endless suffering, for this would be an infinite evil. But is this any more certain, than that infinite goodness would provide means which would be effectual in saving all men? The goodness of God, must not only be impartial, but infinite in degree; and if it be infinite in this sense, it will as assuredly provide effectual means for the salvation of all, as it would be impartial in its plans.

You say, a decree of reprobation, would prove God wanting in goodness; but would it any more, than not providing effectual means for the salvation of all? Surely not; for what a being desires, he always seeks to accomplish, and his efforts to accomplish it, are always in proportion to the strength of his desire. Therefore as God has an infinite desire to save all, his plans will correspond with this. Hence the common Methodist sentiment, that God gave man an agency, which he knew would prove his endless ruin, is as directly at war with goodness, as the old Calvinistic notion of reprobation; because it would be a voluntary act against the eternal interest of man; and thus prove, that God did not desire the happiness of all. The same may be said of the Methodist scheme of salvation; it does not correspond with God's infinite desire to save all; it is wanting in that efficiency which characterises the plans of an Almighty Being.

This reasoning is fully sustained by Scripture. Paul, speaking of his conversion says: 'Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the *effectual*

working of his power." Had this grace been wanting in power, the purpose of God might never have been accomplished. Grace therefore, is not only impartial, but it is armed with a power equal to its benevolent designs.

2. Let us consider this subject in connexion with the goodness, wisdom, and power of God. Having proved his goodness, we need only say, 'His understanding is infinite;' 'all things are naked and open before him,' "Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world:" "To Abraham he saith, I am the Almighty God." As our limits forbid numerous quotations, we will confine our remarks to Isai. xxv. 6, 7, 8, in connexion with these three attributes of God. The prophet says: "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Respecting the number for which this feast is prepared, there can be no doubt—it is for *all* people. Nothing less could be expected from infinite goodness. Calvinism, in the light of this, must hide its head in shame and confusion. But does not this text as fully teach, that all will partake of the feast, as it does, that it was prepared for all? The prophet continues: "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over *all* people, and the vail that is spread over *all* nations. He will *swallow up death in victory*; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off *all* faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it."—Now how can these words be true, without all

being brought to a participation of grace? 'The vail of ignorance is to be taken away, death destroyed, and tears wiped from *all faces*. This is what we should expect from infinite wisdom and power, for if God be infinitely wise, he would form a perfect plan to accomplish his desires, and if he be infinitely powerful, he will carry that plan into complete execution. Therefore, if you deny Universalism, you must either say, God can save all but will not, or would but cannot, or can and will. If you say the first, you deny his goodness, the second, you deny his wisdom or power; but if the third, you make him a perfect Being, worthy the unreserved confidence and unmingled praise of a world.

This reasoning fully justifies the expressive figures used by the prophet—*a feast of fat things for all people—swallow up death in victory—wipe away tears from all faces!* How full of meaning! It has been said, that the imagination of the poet, never conceived a more beautiful figure, than the dove returning to Ararat with the olive-branch, over the still, solitary, measureless, waters, gazing down upon her own shadow, and listening to the music caused by her own wing. But if this exceeds in beauty the figures of the prophet, those exceed this in interest and importance; for while one teaches that the wide waste of water was retiring from the earth, the others teach that the floods of sorrow shall retire from the world, sin and death be destroyed, and all men sit down in the city of the living God, to feast forever on the riches of immortal grace.

I am, &c

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER No. XV.

BALTIMORE, April 26, 1835.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner.

Dear Sir,—I shall in the course of this letter, confine myself to an examination of your positive proofs of the truth of Universalism, not because they contain any thing of a substantial nature, but because the superficial reader might think them unreasonable if I were to pass them unnoticed.

What you have said, in Letter *eleven*, to vindicate your exposition of the phrase “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,” is so trifling that I consider it a surrendering of the argument drawn from that source. The most careless reader must see, that Paul was speaking of the temporal death of mankind in consequence of the fall of Adam and their resurrection at the last day in consequence of the atonement of Christ, and not concerning either happiness or misery in a future state.

You endeavour to draw an argument from Rom. viii. 19—22. in favor of the final happiness of all mankind, and say, “Here the word rendered *creature* and *creation* is the same (*ktisis*) and consequently all, (that is the whole creation) who are subject to vanity, are finally to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” As this is the principal text, among all which you have quoted to prove the final restoration of all men, that carries with it the *appearance* of argument, I shall give it a mature consideration. It appears that the chief

stress is laid upon the signification of the word *ktisis*. The phrase *pasa ktisis*, "every creature," is used *five* times only in the N. Testament. In Mark xvi. 15. our Saviour said to his apostles "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to *every creature* (*pase te ktisei*) It is conceded, that in this text, the phrase means all mankind, and neither more nor less. In Col. i. 15. we read that Jesus is, "the first born of *every creature* (*pases ktiseos*.) It is warmly disputed whether the phrase here refers to the *new creation* in the church, the creation of *all terrestrial things* at the beginning of the world, or the creation of *all intelligencies* in the universe both human and angelic. I incline to the last opinion, for Christ is as much the first born of angels as of men, inasmuch as he is far superior to both; therefore, the phrase in this text means more than all mankind. In Col. i. 23; we read "The Gospel which was preached to *every creature* (*en passe te ktisei*) under heaven. As it would be impossible to believe the gospel was preached, by a few men, in the days of the apostles, to every human being on the whole earth, so we must believe the phrase in this text, has a limited signification, and means only a part of the human race. 1 Peter II. 13, the phrase *passa anthropine ktisei* is rendered, "every ordinance of man," but should be "*every human creature*." That *pasa ktisis* does not always mean all mankind, and neither more nor less, is manifest. 1 From the use of the adjective "*anthropine human*," in this text which confines the meaning to mankind to the exclusion of animals and angels. 2 From the absurdity and

impossibility of obeying every human being on the face of the globe. No man will say, that either reason or revelation requires every christian to be subject to every human being whether woman, man, child, tyrant, king, &c. Consequently the phrase "every human creature" must signify the magistrates or proper rulers or their laws and institutions and not all mankind. Now if the phrase in question means *more* than all mankind in Col. i. 15, and *less* than all mankind in Col. i. 25, in Pet. ii. 13 as it unquestionably does, it may mean either more or less than all mankind in Rom. viii. 22, unless there is something else in the sentence to define its signification besides the necessary import of the word. That the phrase does not mean all mankind, is evident by the language of the epistle, in the 23d verse, where he speaks of himself and those to whom he wrote as not being included in the meaning of the phrase "whole creation," saying "And not only they (the whole creation) but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit," &c. The word *ktisis*, in these verses, has been supposed by *Wesley*, and *Henry* to signify the brute creation; others, among whom are the Universalists, think it means all mankind; while *Clarke*, *Locke*, and many other critics confine it to the Gentile world, and this last signification I think to be the only one that conveys the apostle's meaning.

The word *ktisis* creature without *pasa* occurs 14 times only in the N. Testament and 5 times with *pasa* as cited above, making in all *nineteen* times. It does not appear to me that *ktisis* alone ever means all mankind in the N.

Testament. Sometimes it signifies the regeneration of the heart by the spirit of God, as in 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15. Sometimes it signifies an earthly building. Heb. ix. 11. The following are the fourteen places where the word occurs, which the reader may consult at a convenient time, and judge for himself. Mark. x. 6; xiii. 19; Rom. 1. 20, 25; viii. 19, 20, 21, 39; 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; Heb. iv. 13, ix. 11; 2 Pet. iii 4; Rev. iii. 14.

The word *ktisis* occurs only *three* times in the Septuagint version of the old Testament. In 2 Chron. xiv. 15. it is translated *cattle*; Ezra viii. 21, it is rendered *substance*, and in Psal. civ. 24, it is translated *riches*.

Ktisis occurs in the Apocrypha in the *nine* following places only, and in no instance signifies all mankind, and neither more nor less: Judith ix. 12; xvi. 14; Wis. ii. 6; v. 17; xvi. 24; xix. 6; Ezel. xvi. 17; xliii. 25; xlix. 16. The general use which is made of this word, in the New Testament, in the Septuagint, and in the Apocrypha, clearly shews, that its signification is various, and must be determined by the construction of the sentence and sense of the passage where it occurs. Therefore Universalism can claim no support whatever from the signification of *ktisis*.

You appear to think the phrase "all things" in Eph. I. 10, must mean all mankind, and therefore Universalism must be true. But if we examine the places where the original word (*pas*) is used, the fallacy of your argument will be manifest. The word (*ta panta*) "all things" may not mean all mankind, for we read, (Matt. viii,

33,) "And they that kept them (the swine) fled and told *everything*," (*panta*;) certainly not every human being. "All things (*panta*) that offend," Matt. xiii. 41. Surely all mankind do not offend, nor as such will be plucked out of Christ's kingdom." "*All things* (*panta*;) are ready, come to the marriage," Matt. xxii. 4: not all human beings certainly. "*All things* (*panta*) are possible to him that believeth." Mark. ix. 23. "With God *all things* (*panta*) are possible." Mark ix. 27. "Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about *many things*," (*panta*;) Luke x. 41. "When he is come he will tell us *all things*," (*panta*;) John iv. 25. "See a man which told me *all things*," (*panta*;) John iv. 27. "He shall teach you *all things*," (*panta*;) John xiv. 26.—"I perceive that in *all things* (*panta*) ye are too superstitious." Acts xvii. 22. From these citations it is evident that the phrase "*all things*" is so far from proving "indisputably" your position, that it proves nothing at all. Nor am I certain, that this phrase in the New Testament ever means all mankind, and neither more nor less; so far is it from proving that all mankind shall be finally restored.

In your argument on Heb. ii. 10, you say—"The word here rendered *many*, is *polloi*, and signifies, according to Parkhurst, the 'whole bulk of mankind,' and is equivalent to *pantas anthropous*, (*all men*) in Rom. v. 12." To this I reply, Although you, in common with other Universalists, wish to make the world believe *polloi* means all mankind, I am certain that its signification is variable and must be determined by the scope and general design of the passage where it occurs,

This will be evident by the following quotations: "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and *many (polloi)* there be, which go in thereat," Matth. vii. 13. It will not be pretended that all mankind will go to destruction. "They brought unto him *many (pollous)* that were possessed with devils." Matt. viii. 16. No one will affirm that all mankind were possessed with devils, and were brought to our Lord, in the days of his flesh, to have them cast out. "And *many (polloi)* shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive *many (pollous.)*" Matt. xxiv. 5: It would be absurd to say, all men shall come and deceive all men; therefore *pollous* is limited here. "And *many (polloi)* were there." Matt. xvii. 55. Certainly not all the women in the world. "And straightway *many (polloi)* were gathered together." Mark ii. 2. Not all mankind. "Inasmuch that *many (pollous)* said he is dead." Mark ix. 26. All mankind did not say he was dead.—"*Many (polloi)* of the Jews, and religious proselytes followed Paul." Acts xiii. 42. All the human family did not follow Paul. From these quotations it is manifest that (*polloi*) seldom, if ever, means all mankind; consequently, it is no proof whatever of the final restoration of all mankind.

The duty enjoined in 1 Tim. ii. 1—7 to offer up prayers and supplication for all the human race, is no proof whatever of the doctrine of Universalism, but it merely shews that all are in a state of probation, and may possibly be eternally saved. Of like import is that doctrine which teaches that Christ died for all mankind.

Provision is made in the economy of grace for the salvation of all mankind, consequently, all who believe and obey shall be eternally saved.

Your's, &c.

JOSEPH M'KEE.

LETTER No. XV.

[BALTIMORE, April 29, 1835.]

To Rev. Joseph M'Kee:

Dear Sir—I did expect, as you were stating objections to, and examining the claims of Universalism, that you would consider the arguments by which it is supported. As yet you have not dared to approach these; and even the few which I have adduced, are passed in silence, or with the remark that they war with the threatnings, or that they are too trifling for a reply, or that they prove nothing; or else the whole is turned off by a round-about criticism, showing how many times a particular word is used, &c. all of which has little or nothing to do with the subject. Thus in your whole letter before me, you only attempt a reply to three of my proof texts. The rest are disposed of by mere assertions! Such is the case with 1 Cor. xv.; 1 Tim. i. 1—7. I have only therefore to consider Rom. viii. 19—22; Eph. i. 9; and Heb. ii. 10.

1. Rom viii. 19—22. As you admit that *pasaklisis*, twice signifies the whole creation, out of the five times in which it is used, it is only requisite to observe, 1. That the apostle here uses it, to signify all who were made subject to vanity. "For (ver. 20) the creature (*klisis*) was

made subject to vanity." Now as all were thus made, he must have referred to the whole world. 2. The same number which were made subject to vanity, are to be delivered: "Because (ver. 21,) the *creature* (*ktisis*) itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, &c. 3. What he expresses in these verses, by *ktisis*, in verse 22 he expresses by *pasa e ktisis*, (whole creation.) The *whole creation* groaneth &c. Now as all were made subject to vanity, as all were subjected in hope, and as all groaned and travailed in pain, the apostle must have referred to all men. This is farther evident from the manner, in which he introduces the phrase, "*whole creation*." Speaking to Christians,—christians who were converts from Judaism, he says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present state are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the *creature* (*ktisis*) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Now if by the *creature* (*ktisis*) he meant the Gentiles, how could their "earnest expectation," be proof of the future glory of Hebrew Christians? This *inference* of the apostle therefore, shows, that by *creature*, *creation*, *whole creation*, he meant mankind in their state of vanity. Their earnest expectation in this state, their being subjected in hope, and it being ordained, that they should be delivered from this bondage of corruption, served to strengthen the apostle's belief in the coming glory of christians; for he saw clearly through the Divine plan, and how all the evils they were suffering would terminate in good. Hence he says, not only they—the creation in its sinful

state—but we, believers, the first fruits of the spirit, even we groan within ourselves, though in a measure redeemed from the vanity and bondage in which we have been—being a part of this creation which was made subject to vanity, we also groan within ourselves. Thus do we see that Paul is speaking of all men, and teaching their final deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. This is the deliverance of the *whole creation*, (*pasa ktisis*.) Amen! Glory to God!

Your criticism on *all things* (*panta*) refutes your own doctrine, for in every case you have given, it means all of the thing spoken of. Thus they “told *every thing* that had been said,” “gather out of his kingdom *all things* that offend,” “come for *all things* are ready.” Now according to your own criticism, the phrase means *all* of the things spoken of, and as in my proof texts, it is applied to men, it must mean *all men*. Therefore all men will be saved. You seem to have been aware of the bearing of your criticism, for you seek to evade it by saying, “those who fed swine did not tell the matter to every human being,” when *panta* (all things) is applied to *what* was said, and not to *whom* it was said. Besides you do gross violence to your own explanation of the parable of the wheat and tares, for you say it is a representation of the final separation between the good and bad. Will not all that are bad be at the judgment cast out? I apply the text to the destruction of Jerusalem. Therefore instead of weakening, you have *established* my

arguments, and I almost suspect that such was your intention.

I admit that *pollous* rendered *many* in Heb. ii. 10. must be "interpreted according to the scope and general design of the passage where it occurs." This is the rule by which I was guided to the conclusion, that in Heb. ii. 10. it means all the world. Parkhurst says, this is its meaning here. The connexion proves that he is right. That it is sometimes used in a limited sense, none deny; and there is scarcely a word expressing number or duration but what is. Hence your criticism on *pollous* does not affect my argument, for you have not attempted to prove, that the scope of the subject limits it in Heb. ii. 10.

Having offered all that is requisite for a full reply to your letter, I will call your attention to some further proof in defence of Universalism.

1. *God's promises.* 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers * * * * For this is the covenant that I will make. * * * I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know ye the Lord, for all shall know me from the least unto the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. viii. 8—12.

This being a promise of the New Covenant, I

give it as a specimen of what God has promised, and of the manner in which he has promised.—

1. he has promised that a knowledge of him shall be universal. This agrees with Isaiah's declaration, that the vail of ignorance shall be taken from all people. 2 He has promised that he will be merciful to the unrighteousness of those embraced in the New Covenant, (which is all,) and that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more. But you say, he will remember them endlessly. and punish their authors with *vindictive* vengeance!

To learn the *manner* in which God has promised these infinite blessings, we have only to observe the comparison made between the new and old covenant. The old was, *if ye will do, I will do*. But this proved faulty. The New is unlike this. That reads, *I will write my laws in their hearts; I will be to them a God; and they shall be to me a people, I will be merciful. * * I will remember their sins no more.*

But according to Methodism, the promise of the new Covenant is like the old—altogether conditional; but if so, like the old it would be faulty, and we should have occasion for a third. But the new is a more *excellent* ministry, founded upon *better* promises—as much better as the promise of God, is better than the promise of man.

2. *God's Oath.* God has not only promised the salvation of all, but he has confirmed his promise by an *oath*; and an oath, says Paul, for confirmation, is an end of all strife. Therefore if I can give the oath of God, it is *enough*. God said “by myself have I *sworn* * * that thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemy, * * *

that in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxii: 16—18. Paul on commenting on this says "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could *swear* by no greater, he swore by himself." Heb. vi: 14. He also says, "God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an *oath*." Heb. vi: 17. Such being the nature of an *oath*, there can be no question respecting the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham.

We enquire therefore, 1. how many does it embrace? The answer is *all nations*. Not some of all nations, but *ALL nations*. This universality is indicated by the figures "stars in the heavens," and "sands upon the sea shore." Peter's method of alluding to it, proves it universal—"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers saying, In thy seed shall all the *kindreds* of the earth be blessed." There can be no question then respecting the universality of the promise to Abraham.

2. What was promised? 1. That Christ should possess the gate of his enemy? Gate was anciently used to signify a very strong place; it was where the people sat to execute justice. Hence the figure, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." To possess the gate of an enemy therefore, is to have that enemy in complete subjection to our power. Such a possession will Christ finally have—his enemies will be made his *foot-stool*—they will be subjected—they will be *reconciled*. 2. In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. What can this blessing be? Not any temporal advantage connected

with the Gospel on earth, for not a fourth part of the world know any thing concerning it. Then it must be the blessing of life and glory beyond the grave.—Hence Christ is called the “salvation of God to the ends of the earth,” and the ‘Saviour of the world.’ For the faithful fulfilment of his promise, we have the *oath* of Jehovah. Have you the *oath* of God in favour of endless misery? If not partialism must fall.

3. *God's will.* “Who will have all men to be saved and come unto a knowledge of the truth.” 1 Tim. ii: 4, see also Eph. i: 9, 10. To realize the full force of this language, let us consider that “God works all things after the counsel of his own will, that he does his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.” In making man, in giving him powers, laws and privileges, he was guided by this will, which is in accordance with the eternal interests of all men. Now such being the case, how could God, consistently with his will, so situate man as to expose him to endless death?—This would not be according to the counsel of his own will, for he wills the salvation of all.—Hence God cannot have exposed us to endless misery.

This idea is strengthened by the fact, that the truth is consonant to the salvation of all. “Who will have all men to be saved, and come unto a knowledge of the *truth*.” Now if the truth were not consonant to the salvation of all; or if it were true, that a part are to be saved, and a part lost, then all could come to knowledge of the truth, but only a *part* would be saved.—Hence God willing the salvation of all, and doing all things according to the counsel of his own

will, has ordained universal salvation; and therefore, that is immutable and everlasting *truth*.—This all can know, and be saved.

4. *God's decree*. "I will declare the *decree* * * Ask of me and I will give thee, the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," Here is what the infinite Jehovah has *decreed*; not offered, not provided, but *decreed* though Jesus Christ.—The *heathen* and the *uttermost parts* of the earth decreed to salvation! A more expressive term could not be used.

Where is Calvinism in the light of this testimony? Where too is Methodism, which denies the existence of such a decree? They both vanish, and among the thousand errors, that have existed only in the disordered imaginations of men. This testimony of David coincides with what Paul says in Heb. 1. 2. "Whom he hath *appointed* heir of all things." This word *appointed* is the same as *decreed*.—Thus we read;—He *appointed* other seventy—I will *appoint* to you the kingdom, as my Father hath *appointed* a kingdom to me. According then to the scriptural use of the word *appointed*, it shows the positive certainty of Christ being *heir of all things*. Something more must be intended than that means are provided for this, that all can be saved, that there is grace sufficient for all. His being appointed, shows that all the perfections of the Father and Son are pledged for the execution of the work; and that the decree of Heaven has gone forth, declaring that Jesus shall be heir of all.

I am, &c.,

OTIS A. SKINNER.

LETTER XVI.

EASTON MD. May 24, 1835.

To Rev. Otis A. Skinner:

DEAR SIR:—I have just read your *fifteenth* letter, and find nothing in it, that requires either a careful or a critical reply. That part of it which relates to my *fifteenth* communication, needs no investigation. The new proofs as you suppose them to be, of the final salvation of all men, require some notice, not because they contain any real proof, but because the unthinking reader, might suppose them to be of some importance, were I to pass them by, in total silence.

Your new proofs are taken from the *promise, oath, will, and decree* of God. All these things may appear very plausible to some persons; however, I shall attend to them in order.

1. *The promises of God.* The promises of the Most High, which are made to the human race, may be variously classified. They relate to time and eternity, to the body and to the soul, and they are conditional and unconditional in their nature, and with respect to their accomplishment. Some of the promises of temporal good are absolutely *unconditional*: as the promise of summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, the fertilizing showers of rain, and all the vegetable productions of the earth, for the use of man: all these things are given, in a certain sense, irrespective of any condition on the part of man. But, the promise of full barns and store-houses, great wealth and affluence, &c. are *conditional*, and depend, in a great measure, upon our diligence and unwearied perseverance in the pursuits of industry and domestic economy. “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”

“The hand of the diligent maketh rich.” Some of the promises of spiritual good are absolutely *unconditional*, as they are fulfilled without any previous condition on the part of man whatever. Of this class are the promise of a Saviour coming into the world to be an expiatory sacrifice for all sin—the promise of the Holy Spirit to convince the world of sin—the promise of the means of grace, and the establishment of gospel ordinances in the Christian church—the promise of a great diffusion of divine knowledge over the face of the earth. While all these general promises may be regarded as emanating unconditionally from the unbounded goodness and benevolence of God, it is equally certain, that a great number of the promises of spiritual good are *conditional*, depending on something which must be performed by the creature; for instance, the promises of the pardon of sin, and the purification of the heart by the Spirit of God, are suspended upon the condition of repentance, towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which must be performed by the creature through divine aid, otherwise the promises never will be fulfilled. The promise of eternal life is suspended upon the condition, that we accept of the overtures of divine mercy, as propounded in the gospel, and manifest this acceptance by faithfully discharging the duties we owe to God, to our neighbour, and to ourselves. The threatening of eternal misery, is suspended upon the condition, that we reject the gospel of Christ, and live in the violation of the laws of God; on all such, the horror and wrath of the Almighty shall be poured out without mixture, and without end, as to its duration. That the promises of God, in relation to individual happi-

ness are contingent, and not absolutely certain, but depend upon contingent circumstances connected with the volition of the human will, is manifest from the sacred Scriptures. Take, for instance, the declaration of the Almighty, himself, where, in speaking of the consequence of the Jews transgressing his law, he says, "*Ye shall know my BREACH of promise.*" Num. xiv. 34. If the promises of eternal life were unconditional, why did the Apostle Paul caution the Hebrew converts to "take heed lest a promise, being left them of entering into his (God's) rest, any of them, should seem to come short of it." Heb. iv. 1. These scriptures prove indisputably, that the promises made to individuals, concerning future happiness, are all conditional. If this were not so, there is no possible use for a day of judgment; but there is a day of judgment appointed, in which the secrets of all hearts, will be made manifest, and the hidden things of darkness, brought to light, and every man receive a reward or punishment according to the deeds done in the body. Until you can prove that all the promises of God are unconditional in their fulfilment, it is vain, to adduce them in proof of the final salvation of all men; but this you never can do, while the bible is taken as a standard of appeal in these matters.

2. *The oath of God.* The oath of the Almighty is of the same force and meaning with that of his word; the former may be better calculated to make an impression on the human heart, than the latter, while they are both equally obligatory on the faithfulness of God, as it regards their accomplishment. The oath which God swore to Abraham, had respect to the Messiah, and the

prosperity of his kingdom and government, which were to emanate from the offspring of that Patriarch, as it regards the flesh. This oath was literally and actually fulfilled in the coming of Christ, the spread of the gospel, and the innumerable multitudes, who were regenerated in heart, and reformed in life by the grace of God. The oath of God, recorded in the ex. the Psalm, and quoted by St. Paul in Heb. vii. 21, concerning the priesthood of Christ, is similar in meaning, with that concerning Abraham, inasmuch, as they both relate to the same subject with some little difference, the former respects the Messiah, and his kingdom, the latter, the priesthood of Christ, and the success of his ministerial labours. I can see no proof in all this, of the total extinction of human misery. You ask me "have I the oath of God in favour of endless misery?" To this I answer unhesitatingly—I have. If you will open your bible and turn to Psal. xcvi. 11. you will find that the Jews tempted God, and grieved his Spirit for the space of forty years in the wilderness; the consequence of which was, he swore in his wrath, they should not enter into his rest. You will probably say, this was a worldly rest, the land of Canaan, and not the happiness of the saints, in a future state. To this objection, I answer, we have an infallible commentator on the passage. St. Paul, applies it to the future state. In Heb. iii. 3. the apostle in addressing believers, warns them of the awful effects of unbelief, and quotes Psal. cx. 11. and applies the passage concerning the land of Canaan, as a type of the heavenly blessedness. Then, if the sense of the Apostle is not this, that God has sworn in his wrath that unbelievers shall never enter into

eternal life, I confess, I do not understand what he means. If then, we have the oath of God, to assure us, that unbelievers, shall *not* enter the heavenly felicity, it clearly follows, we have his oath, in favour of endless misery.

3. *The will of God.* The will of the eternal Being, as it stands unconnected with the moral actions of his creatures, in relation to his own works and designs, must, undoubtedly, be considered as absolute, and infinitely beyond the control of future contingencies. That it is the will of God that "all men should be saved"—"be sanctified," and "come to the knowledge of the truth," is manifest, both from the Scripture and his benevolent nature. But that his will, in these respects, is not accomplished, is also manifest, both from Scripture and woful experience. The will of God in relation to the morality of his people, and its consequences, is contingent, or depending on contingent circumstances, respecting its accomplishments; otherwise, the freedom of the will is destroyed, and with it, all distinction between sin and virtue, as there can be no sin in the world, if the human will is not free. That some things happen, which are contrary to the will of God, none can deny. To illustrate this, it may be remarked, that the assassinations and murders that frequently happen, cannot be in accordance with the will of God, because he has expressly said "thou shalt not kill." If, then, the temporal life of a man may be taken away, contrary to the will of God, why not the spiritual and eternal life?

4. *The decree of God.* "The decrees of God" is a phrase that does not occur in the Scriptures. The decree mentioned in the second Psalm,

not called the decree of God; nor am I certain, it has any relation to mankind at all, but merely to the appointment of Christ, to the office of Mediator. He must be very sharp sighted indeed, that can see any thing in this Psalm, to favour the doctrine of Universalism. I confess it is too obscure for me to detect it. Christ being heir of all things, as mentioned in Heb. I. furnishes no proof of the final restoration of the damned. Christ may be said to be heir of all things.—1. Because he created all things Col. I. 14—16. 2. Because the Father appointed him to be the heir of all things. Heb. I. 2. 3. Because he has laid down his life to purchase all things for his church, Heb. II. 9. The phrase “all things” has several significations, as may be seen in my last letter, consequently it is, in itself, no proof of Universalism. The unchangeable decree, of determination of God is, that the wicked shall be punished and the righteous rewarded; but no decree can be found in the Scriptures, to say all mankind shall infallibly obtain everlasting felicity.

As this is the concluding letter on the subject of endless misery, I now propose to discuss with you at some future opportunity, through the columns of the “Pioneer,” *all* the errors of the Universalists. Most of these dangerous doctrines have been kept behind the scenery, so that the public are little acquainted, either with them or their dangerous tendency. The following doctrines are denied by most Universalists:—

1. The fall of man, or human depravity. 2. The doctrine of the Trinity. 3. The Divinity of Christ, the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit. 4. The vicarious sacrifice of Christ. 5. The regeneration of the human

heart by the Spirit of God. 6. The existence of devils, and 7. The eternity of hell's torments.

Having concluded the discussion on the subject of future misery, and having entered into some engagements that will occupy all my time for the present, I hope to discuss, in the course of a few months, perhaps weeks, the six remaining points of difference, between your creed and mine, if, indeed, you do differ with me upon each of the particulars already mentioned. In the mean time, I wish to assure you, that I am your sincere friend and brother in the gospel of Jesus Christ, our common Saviour.

JOSEPH M'KEE

LETTER No. XVI.

Baltimore, May 27th, 1835.

To Rev. Joseph M'Kee:

DEAR SIR—In letter No. 14 you charge me with two *literary frauds or falsehoods*, for saying, that “Kuinoel relies on Eichhorn as authority, and quotes the Targums as the work of the 3d or 4th century.” And in proof of this charge, you say, “first, Kuinoel does not rely on Eichhorn as authority concerning the dates of the Targums at all, nor does he, *second*, quote the Targums as the work of the 3d or 4th century. “But I will state what Kuinoel does say on this subject, and then it will be seen, that he decidedly establishes my side of the question. Kuinoel in his prolegomena, gives us a dissertation on “the *Logos*, and in page 109 he cites the Targums to show what were the Jews’ opinion “upon this subject at the time of Christ. He then “goes on to say, that admitting the Targums “were (which he by no means admits) not writ-

“ten till the second or third century, it made no
 “difference, as the Jews were extremely tena-
 “cious of their opinions, so that whatever senti-
 “ments or opinions they once held, they always
 “held. In a note, at the bottom of the page, he
 “refers to Eichhorn as one who had offered
 “some trifling reasons to show, that the Targums
 “were not written till the 3d or 4th century.
 “Hence Kuinoel is decidedly in favour of the no-
 “tion that the Targums were written before
 “Christ; at all events, that they contain the no-
 “tions which the Jews always had.

In reply to this, I merely called for *proof*, to sustain your charges. But as this call has not been answered, and as you have concluded the discussion, it becomes requisite for me to speak in self defence. I will therefore, give a literal translation of the passage in Kuinoel, together with his note, both of which have been referred to. Let it be observed, that Kuinoel had been speaking of the Jewish opinion, in the time of Christ, concerning the *Logos*. Now for the passage and note in question:

“That this was the opinion of the Jews of that
 “age maybe proved by many passages of the Chal-
 “dee versions, [i. e. Targums,] which, even if they
 “are of a much later age,* may nevertheless, be
 “properly used for ascertaining the sentiments
 “of the earlier Jews also, since the Jews were
 “always very tenacious of their opinions, as,
 “Keil (*De Doctoribus &c. &c.*) and Bertholdt
 “(*loc. cit. &c. &c.*) have truly asserted.

“**Note*—See Eichhorn’s *Einleit* in d. A. F.
 “*Their.* l i §213. 222, coll. 210. who there shows,
 “that the Pharaphrase [i. e. Targum] of Onkelos,
 the oldest of those remaining, was composed

"about the year 300, after the birth of Christ.
"Kuinoel comment in *Johan Prolegom.* pp. 108,
109.

Such are the passage and note in Kuinoel.—
Now you say, here Kuinoel does by no means
admit, that the Targums were not written till
the 2d or 3d century. Why Sir, did you not
point out the expression; or intimation, in which
Kuinoel does by no means admit the later date
of the Targums? Again you say, "until the 2d
or 3d century." What do you mean by this?—
Kuinoel says nothing about the 2d or 3d centu-
ry; he quotes Eichhorn for the date A. D. 300;
and do you take that for the end of the second
century or the third? I should judge Sir, that in
reckoning centuries, you make the first century
begin with the year 100, and end at the year
200 &c. Again, you say, Kuinoel in a note at
the bottom of the page, [which note we have
given entire above] refers to Eichhorn, as one
who had offered some trifling reasons to show,
that the Targums were not written till the 3d
or 4th century. But sir, Kuinoel says not a
word about the "trifling reasons;" therefore, you
must father this invention yourself. We remem-
ber a word respecting literary *frauds* or false-
hoods. Again, you say, Kuinoel is decidedly
in favour of the notion, that the Targums were
written before Christ. Really, I cannot see how
you can extract any idea of this, from Kuino-
el's words. The facts as any body may see, by
looking back to the passage from Kuinoel are
these, viz: Kuinoel does not pretend to decide
for himself the age of the Targums; but he ad-
mits, that they were of a much later age, than
that of Christ, without saying a word of their hav-

ing been written *before*; and then he refers to Eichhorn as having showed, that the oldest of them, that of Onkelos, was composed as late as about A. D. 300. Observe, Kuinoel, says in the note, "See Eichhorn's Einleit * * *who there shows*, that the Paraphrase [i. e. the Targum] of Onkelos *was composed* about A. D. 300. I will now add, that Kuinoel immediately proceeds to quote, his proposed illustrations of Jewish opinions, not only from the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel, but also from the Jerusalem Targum and the Targum of Pseudo Jonathan: which two last are acknowledged by all critics, both Jewish and christian, so far as I ever heard to be even later than A. D. 300. So that referring to these *collectively*, as Kninoel does, in the above extract, it is impossible that he should suppose them to have been written before Christ. Thus do we see, the injustice of your charge, of *literary frauds and falsehoods*. You are the man sir, who "suspects" some of our "citations to be forgeries" and who says "his suspicions have not yet been removed." This is not strange; they seem, I regret to say, to be flourishing in a very congenial soil. But these things, together with your unfair quotations from Lexicons and Maclane's note in Mosheim, only serve to show, the weakness of your cause; for *Truth* requires the aid of no such measures—it disdains them. These things are reluctantly mentioned, but I could not close this controversy, without disproving the charge which you preferred against me, and on the strength of which, you inferred that all my quotations, from German critics were false. My arguments therefore respecting the dates of the

Targums, must be admitted by all, nothing that you have said, has weakened them in the least. Indeed your attempt to make Kuinoel speak what he never intended, shows that you are conscious of the truth of my positions.

It now remains for me to examine your present letter.

1. *The promises of God.* Under this head, you have a long paragraph of assertions and assumptions, but you have not made a single allusion, to those promises, which I brought forward, as being unconditional. That God has conditional promises I admitted. When he says to the Jews, ye shall know my breach of promise, he refers to a conditional promise of temporal good, which he had made them, which conditions they had not complied with. See Num. xiv. 34. So, when Paul said, "take heed, lest a promise being left them of entering into his rest, any of them should seem to come short of it," he refers to that conditional promise, which had been made, of rest to those, who would faithfully follow Jesus to the end of the Jewish dispensation. See the whole Epistle to the Hebrews, which relates to the trials of the christians, to their duties under these trials, their promise of deliverance, and rest at the coming of Christ. The conditionality of these promises I admit; but this admission does not weaken my position, that God has unconditionally promised the salvation of all men. Look again sir, at the promises of the new covenant as stated in my last letter; look too, at the promises made to Christ—Jehovah says, that he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied; that to him every knee shall bow, and tongue confess; and that the pleasure of the Lord shall

prosper in his hands. There are no conditions here; and therefore, we must regard these promises, as expressing in the most full and positive manner, what God intends to do. Who dare add an if to the Divine testimony, when God has said ALL SHALL KNOW ME, from the least, even unto the greatest?

But you say, unless I can prove, that all God's promises are unconditional, it is vain to adduce them in favour of Universalism. Who Sir, did you suppose, would believe an assertion, so inconsistent as this? So far from this being requisite, if I can prove, that *one* promise, relating to the salvation of all men, is unconditional, it is sufficient; for shall we refuse to believe God unless he piles promise upon promise? Again, you say, if my views are correct, wherein, is the use of a day of judgment? Well sir, I confess, I see no use for such a judgment as you teach, neither do I believe in it. Archimides said, he could raise the world, if he could only get a resting place for his lever; and you would prove the eternity of misery, if you could only have the privilege of assuming your premises. You here assume your application of scripture, and your notions of a judgment, and from these assumptions you infer, that my sentiments are wrong!

Nothing that you have said, therefore, affects my arguments in the least. *Tears shall be wiped from all faces, and all shall sing the song of Moses and the lamb. This glorious result, God has unconditionally promised.*

2. *God's oath.* In my last, I proved, that God had declared by an oath, that Christ should possess the gate of his enemies, that all should be subjected to him, and that in him all the kin

dreds of the earth should be blessed. Your only reply is, *I can see no proof in all this, of the total destruction of human misery.* Can you expect Sir, that such declarations will pass for argument? No man can expect this, it is therefore, yielding the question.

Your proof, that God has sworn saying, some shall never be saved, is too far fetched; because 1st. Paul does not, as you say, make an application of the Psalmist's language; he simply draws from the example of those who fell in the wilderness, and in consequence, did not enter Canaan, their long expected rest—I say he simply draws from them a warning example to the people of his age, and shows them, how they would come short of their expected rest, if there were in them, an evil heart of unbelief. But admitting that Paul did comment on the language of David, I deny that he was speaking of the final state of any. Nothing can be more evident, than that he referred to the rest of the faithful, after Christ should come and destroy those, who persecuted the christians. This was a rest, with which they were promised; by this, they were encouraged to faithfulness and perseverance. I know you have popular opinion on your side in this matter, but the Scriptures are our guide in this discussion; to them, all appeals should be made; and as these give the oath of Jehovah, against the eternity of misery, it does seem that our doubts should be removed, and that we should unhesitatingly admit, the great doctrine of infinite love and grace.

“I have sworn by myself, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every

tongue shall swear, surely shall say, in the Lord, have I righteousness and strength." Such is the work which God has *sworn*, he will perform.

3. *God's will.* In your remarks on this subject, you have overlooked two important particulars. 1. That as God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and as it is his will that all men shall be saved, he could not place man under circumstances or give him powers, which he knew would prove his endless ruin, for that would be acting against his will. 2. In the same verse, where the apostle speaks of the will of God, to save all, he speaks of his purpose. Thus he says "having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his own good pleasure, which he hath *purposed* in himself, &c. Here we see, that what God willed, respecting the final condition of men, he purposed. Hence it is his will of *purpose*, to save all men. And dare you, dare any man say, that this will, will not be accomplished? "As God has thought so shall it come to pass, and as he has *purposed*, so shall it stand."

In view of these two considerations, who can say, that God's will concerning the final destiny of the world, will be defeated? Defeated!

"Hold! shall the recording angel, as he registers the last line, in the book of human destinies, make the mortifying report in Heaven," that finite man was too great for the Almighty, that God's arm was shortened, that he could not save? So says Mr. McKee. But what says Jehovah? Ans. *My council shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*"

But you tell us, that God's will is defeated with respect to the present conduct of men; and

therefore, it may be, with respect to their eternal salvation. This is a contracted view of the subject; and one remark will be sufficient to show its error. There are some things, which God wills in themselves considered, such as virtue and happiness. There are other things, which he wills all things considered, such as sin and punishment. He wills them, because he makes them instrumental in accomplishing what he desires in itself considered. Consequently, it is the very height of absurdity to say, in some things, the will of God is frustrated; and it would seem, that no man, who has reflected on the perfections of God and his government, could for a moment entertain a sentiment so preposterous. While the Bible declares, then, that God works all things, after the counsel of his own will, I shall never be found in the ranks of those, who teach, that man can defeat the will of God.

4. *The decree of God.* Your remarks respecting the decree of God, require no answer. You may feign, not to see in the words of David (Psal. 2. 7, 8.) any thing which teaches that God has decreed universal salvation; but while it reads—"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.—Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen, for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," I have no fears, but what our readers will see, the proof, for which I contend.

How could it be said, that Christ was *appointed* heir of all things, if there were contingencies about it? How could he be called *heir* of all things, unless he *inherits* them? These are the two points embraced in my remarks on this subject; and until

these are refuted, my arguments remain in their full force. But you say, "all things" do not mean all men. Now I respectfully ask, on what authority such an assertion can be made? Did not Christ come to save all men? Did he not invite all to his kingdom? Did he not die for all? If so, by what authority can you say, he is not the *appointed heir* of all? Do you believe Sir, that God would send his Son to accomplish, what he knew would never be done? How shall we reconcile your notion, that Christ will not succeed in the work he came to do, with those numerous passages, which teach, that the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in his hands, that he shall not fail, nor be discouraged, that it is a light thing for him to accomplish this work, and that he shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied? I confess Sir, that while thus surrounded with the testimony of God, in support of my views, I am content to believe with the Apostle, that "Christ is *appointed heir of all things*." This is the *decree* of the infinite Jehovah. The heathen shall be his *inheritance* and the uttermost parts of the earth his *possession*.

I have now, Dear Sir, gone through with an examination of all your arguments against Universalism, and of your strictures on the few proofs, which I have brought in its defence. For some reason, best known to yourself, you have found it convenient to pass in entire silence, a great portion of my arguments, or with the simple remark, that they were unworthy of notice. On this, I make no comment, the reader must draw his own inference.

In conclusion I will only say, I am truly sorry, that so few of the arguments, on which Univer-

salism is established. have been examined in this discussion. Those which have been introduced, are only, as it were, the first chapter, to a whole volume. The arguments are numerous which, yet remain untouched. The mercy of God, his long suffering, his everlasting kindness and compassion; the grace of God, the unsearchable riches of his grace, together with his *exceeding great*, and *precious* promises; the immutability of God, the unchanging nature of his love and goodness; the faithfulness of God, which endureth from generation to generation, and which is established in the very heavens:—The love and tenderness of Christ, the universality and object of his death, his untiring zeal and faithfulness, his devotion to the interests of mankind, his miracles of mercy, his prayer of forgiveness, his tears of sympathy, his bloody sweat, his unerring wisdom, his impartial love, his unconquerable power, his promises of grace, his will, his purpose, his triumphant death and resurrection:—The kingdom of Christ, its pure principles, its perfect laws its peaceful nature, its holy provisions, and its final spread from sea to sea and the rivers to the ends of the earth:—The Gospel of Christ, its wisdom, love and grace; its efficacy and perfection, the light which it imparts, the hopes which it inspires, and the grand prospects which it discloses; its motives to duty, its dissuasions from vice, and its pressing invitations of mercy:—The permanency of virtue, its power to impart peace joy, to satisfy the mind, to meet its wants, to soothe its afflictions, to heal its wounds, and to throw a halo of glory over the charms and pleasures of earth—all these, I desired to bring

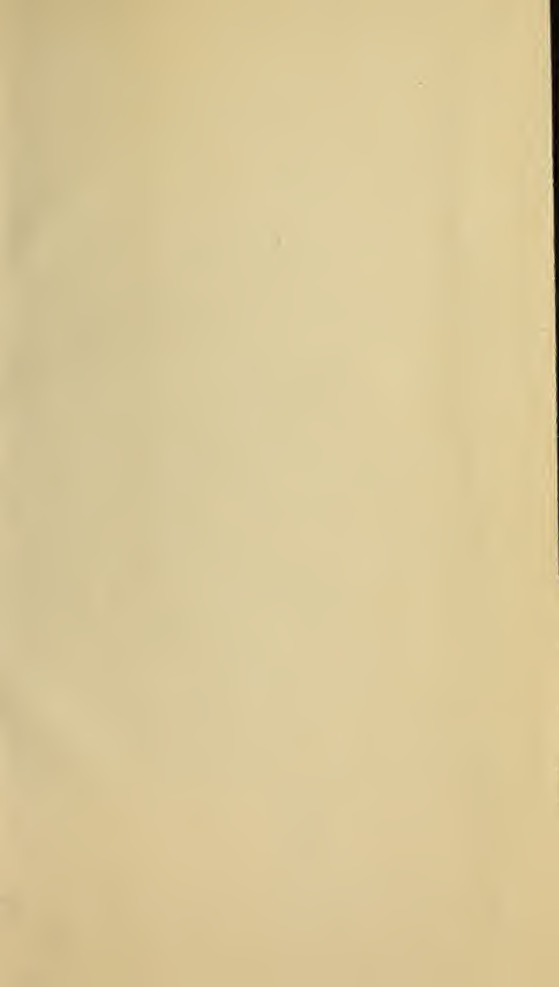
forward and illustrate, and to show how fully they prove the great doctrine of Universal Salvation. But you commenced this discussion, and you have a right to say, when it shall end. I will therefore only add, as an apology for the many imperfections in the style of my letters, that they have been written in the greatest haste, and under circumstances which prevented their revision. For in addition to my weekly preparations for the pulpit, my parochial visits, and family duties, I have had the whole care and management of our weekly journal, besides travelling much to proclaim the good news of salvation. Being thus situated, I have paid no attention to style; my whole aim has been, to meet your arguments, and if my language has been intelligible to the reader, my object, in this respect, has been fully gained.

I hold Sir, to no doctrine which I am not willing to defend. I am ready therefore to discuss with you, any point, on which we may be at issue. Truth, has nothing to fear from investigation. She courts inquiry. This discloses her excellencies, reveals her beauties and fair proportions, and imparts to her beams a new lustre and glory. Finally, if our present discussion, has been the means of swelling, in any degree, the tide of human advancement, of lifting one soul up in knowledge, of imparting to one mind the light of truth, or of disarming prejudice of any of its powers, I shall feel compensated for the toil and labour, it has cost me.

I remain, Dear Sir; your sincere Friend
and Brother, in the bonds of Christ,

OTIS A. SKINNER.

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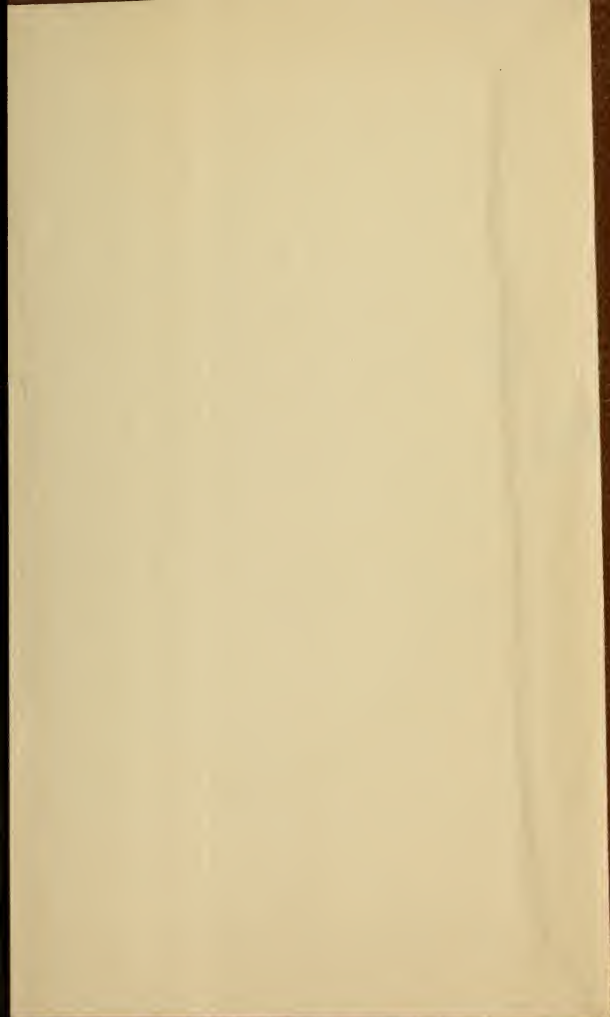


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